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THE TIME
OF
THE MILLENNIUM
INVESTIGATED;
AND
ITS NATURE DETERMINED
ON
SCRIPTURAL GROUNDS.

BY FREDERICK NOLAN, LL. D.
VICAR OF PRITTLEWELL, ESSEX.



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TO THE MOST REVEREND

WILLIAM,

LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,

&c. &c. &c.

My Lord Archbishop,

In the Work which I venture to submit to your Grace, I beg to offer the partial application of a principle for eliciting and establishing truth ; which, though perfect in its present adaptation, will require the space of several volumes for its full exemplification.

The principle, on the nature of which I have been already permitted to explain myself to your Grace, although peculiarly applicable to History,

4.21.32 6.11.72

as well sacred as profane, is capable of being extended likewise to Prophecy, the incidents of which, in the process of their accomplishment, pass, from predicted verities, into historical realities. In the subjoined pages, I have undertaken to give a proof of its universality, in applying it to a subject, which is, at present, of intense and general interest.

Were I merely to consult propriety in dedicating the Volume, with which I venture to approach your Grace, I should be withheld by few scruples from making the offering. The fitness would be at once acknowledged, that a Work, one professed object of which is to ascertain the state of the Church, when Christianity will assume its purest and most attractive form, should be inscribed with the Prelate's name, in whose character and manners all its graces are truly exemplified. In the frankness of this declaration, I am not indeed secure of escaping the displeasure of your Grace; although I feel safe from the imputation of flattery from

every other source. I shall therefore throw myself, for protection, upon the condescending kindness and indulgence, which has marked every communication with which I have been honored by your Grace, upon the subject which now appears in a form less undeserving of notice, than when it first solicited your Grace's attention.

I have the honor to be,

My Lord,

Your Grace's

Most obliged obedient humble Servant,

FRED. NOLAN.

Prittlewell Vicarage,

Feb. 1, 1831.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

In the difficult subject, to which inquiry is directed in the following pages, the boundary between truth and heresy is marked by so faint a line, that it has unfortunately escaped observation. The author consequently deemed it a duty to engage in the following investigation, with a view to determine their respective limits. In discharging the task which he thus undertook, he has been less forcibly impelled by the desire to convey a just view of the subject, than to correct the false and pernicious opinions which have been propagated respecting it.

The peculiar ground on which he rests his claims to attention, are founded, not merely on the labor which he has employed, to disengage the subject from gross and inveterate error; but on the method of proof, by which he has sought to establish its truth, with a certainty which he ventures to consider demonstrative. The inferences which his predecessors in the same field have attained by historical induction, it has been his object to establish by chronological evidence. The results at which he has thus arrived, will, he trusts, be found to have equally gained in their conclusiveness and their precision.

**Quæ Chiliastæ carnaliter asserunt esse complenda nos spiritu-
aliter futura credamus : in qualitate promissionum non in tem-
pore discrepantes. S. Hieron. Com. in Esai. cap. lxi.**

THE
TIME AND NATURE
OF THE
MILLENIUM
INVESTIGATED.

From the marks of wisdom and power discernible in the works of the Deity, Natural Religion is not more surely furnished with evidence of a Great First Cause, than Revealed Religion is supplied with demonstration of a Superintending Providence. The testimony of Prophecy and Miracles, on which Revelation rests the evidence of its truth, is, in this sense, termed in Scripture “the Demonstration of Wisdom and Power;”¹ as the attestation which they respectively afford of the supreme intervention is resolvable into these attributes of the Divinity. Nor is the analogy which exists between the natural and preternatural scheme of Religion confined to these traits of resemblance. So uniform is the divine economy in its nature, and with so equal a hand is it dispensed, that no

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 4.

age is destitute of one of these species of evidence of the divine interposition. In the delivery of a Revelation, professing to be imparted by God, if it is vouchsafed to one period to behold the Miracles wrought in attestation of his power, it is reserved for another to witness the accomplishment of the Prophecies evincing his wisdom.²

However diversified the subject of Prophecy, which brings this evidence in confirmation of Revelation ; however various the organs through which it is conveyed ; it has a common object in pointing to a period of repose, when the creation will be relieved from the natural evils with which it is oppressed. With a constant and consistent testimony, it animates our faith with the prospect, and cheers our hope with the promise “ that there is a rest for the people of God ; ”³ in which the moral derangement of the present state will be rectified, and the goodness and justice of the Deity vindicated in his dispensations to mankind. But of the successive Revelations, in which the scheme of God’s providence is traced to this great consummation, the Apocalyptic vision is the most circumstantial in its descriptions, and interesting in its subject. As professing to reveal the full and final determination of the Omnipotent, with respect to this world and all that it contains ; it becomes an object of that increasing interest, which rises in its

² See Newton on Prop. Introd. p. 4.

³ Heb. iv. 9.

intenseness, as the crisis which it foretells draws nearer to its accomplishment.

The evidence, however, which is attainable, that what has been thus foretold will be in reality fulfilled, is necessarily susceptible of different degrees of conclusiveness, proportionable to the nature of the proof, by which a demonstration may be effected. The closeness with which chronology produces its results gives a cogency to its conclusions which history often fails in imparting to its deductions. Natural sagacity may be adequate, from the calculation of probabilities, to predict an event, where a foresight which is preternatural and divine would be requisite to determine the precise date of its occurrence. While chronology thus affords the most accurate instrument by which the scheme of Prophecy may be measured and applied to the course of events, its employment is recognised as legitimate by its inspired authors; as they have adopted measured periods in the prediction of incidents. And had it not been thus confirmed by the practice of Daniel and St. John, between whom a striking coincidence exists in computing events,⁴ it might derive authority from the fixed period, within which the entire scheme of prophecy, and the series of human events, is circumscribed; as comprised in the great sabbatical period, which affords evidence and illustration of

⁴ Newton ut supr. Vol. II. p. 410.

the Millennium. With a view to this distribution of the course of time, which has been equally admitted by Jews and Christians,⁵ it has been concluded, that the Creator, who could have called the world into existence, at a moment and by a word, consumed the space of a week in its production; and thus rendered the sabbath, on which he suspended his work, significant of the sabbatism, which, in the fulness of time, would be enjoyed by the Creation.⁶

The learned writers who have engaged in collecting authorities in support of this tenet of the Primitive Church, to which they impute much of the zeal and constancy of the early martyrs,⁷ have referred in support of it to the Jewish traditions; and the course which they have pursued is justified by the practice of the apostolical writers, who have given it the authority of inspiration, in assigning it a place in the canonical scripture. Nor will the coincidence which is discoverable between the Rabbinical and the Evangelical writers, on this point, occasion any difficulty, when it is considered that the Jewish Church enjoyed in the prophets, a

⁵ Vid. Burnet de Stat. Mort. cap. vi. p. 148. Theor. of Earth, B. III. ch. v. Vol. II. p. 47.

⁶ S. August. Civ. Dei. Lib. XX. cap. vii. Lactant. Div. Instit. Lib. VII. cap. xiv. Burnet Theor. ut supr. p. 51. Newton ut supr. p. 378.

⁷ Burnet de Stat. Mort. ib. p. 147. Newton, ib. p. 378.

succession of inspired expositors, from whom much of their traditional lore has descended, as comments on the sacred writings. And the extraordinary conformity between the Christian and the Jewish writers, not merely in the mode of stating the dogma, but in the images with which they have illustrated it, if it does not stamp authority on the traditional account, will justify its production in explanation of the scripture doctrine.

Of the great mass of traditional matter which has been transmitted to us through the Rabbins, but a small portion has descended with higher recommendations than that which regards the Millennium. The tradition respecting it is derived from the school of Elias; whose name is generally associated with the time of the Great Restitution, if not with the authority, after the example of the sacred writers.⁸ The Hebrew doctors have asserted the mystical nature of the sabbath,⁹ and have accordingly considered it as symbolical of rest in life eternal.¹⁰ The peculiar constitution of the Levitical ceremonial, in which the number seven was regarded with a religious veneration, naturally led them to form this inference; respect being had, in the appointment of the Jewish festivals, whether computed by days, weeks, months, years, or jubi-

⁸ Mal. iv. 5. Matt. xi. 4. Mark ix. 11.

⁹ R. Dav. Kimchi in Ps. xix. 8.

¹⁰ Zohar in Gen. fol. 3 et 4, ed. Mant.

lees, to that septenary distribution. From these principles the dogma respecting the Millennium appears to have been derived, by an obvious and natural process of deduction.¹¹

But by whatever method of inference it may have been obtained, the Talmudical writers have expressed themselves respecting it in the following terms: ‘ It is a tradition of the school of Elias, ‘ that the world will last six thousand years; two ‘ thousand devoid of law, two thousand under ‘ the law, and two thousand under the Messiah.’¹² And one of the Rabbins, deducing the dogma from the analogy of the Jewish festivals, thus traces the connexion between the text and comment: ‘ As Rabbi Ketina says, the world shall last 6000 ‘ years; for one thousand it shall be laid waste, of ‘ which it is said (Is. ii. 11), “ the Lord alone shall ‘ “ be exalted in that day.” Tradition bears out ‘ R. Ketina in his opinion. As of seven years each ‘ seventh is a year of remission, so, of the seven ‘ thousand years of the world, the seventh will be ‘ a Millennium of remission, that in it the Lord ‘ may be exalted.’¹³ The same inference might be deduced from the analogy of the Jubilee, which

¹¹ Vid. Schötg. Hor. Hebr. et Wetst. Nov. Test. ad Heb. iv. 9. Apoc. xx. 2. Burnet Theor. ut supr. p. 210.

¹² Gemar. Ord. IV. tr. iv. tit. Sanhedrin, f. 90.

¹³ Gemar. Sanhedr. ut supr. ap. Mede, p. 535. et Newton, ut supr. p. 373.

returned with each revolution of these sabbatical periods;¹⁴ and which is conceived to have been instituted, not less with a retrospective view to the observance of the sabbath, at the creation of the world, than with a prospective view to the great sabbatism which should succeed its dissolution.¹⁵

It has been often shewn, in detail, that the doctrine which thus originated with the Jews, has passed into the Christian Church, and has been generally adopted by the early Fathers.¹⁶ But it is of higher importance to us to be assured that it has the sanction of the inspired writers, by whom it has been incorporated in the canonical scriptures. On the authority which it derived from this source

¹⁴ Levit. xxv. 9. I may observe, that the analogy of the Levitical festivals determines the idle question which has been raised respecting the time of the Jubilee: comp. Lev. xxiii. 3. 15. 27., xxv. 3, 4. Comp. Des-Vignol. Chronol. Vol. I. p. 698.

¹⁵ Leusd. Philol. Hebraeo-mixt. p. 288. 290.

¹⁶ Burnet Theor. ut supr. B. III. cap. v. p. 49, sq. Newton Disser. Vol. II. p. 374, sq. I shall merely quote the testimony of two learned divines of our Church, who were not interested in the support of a hypothesis. Ep. Fell n. in Barnab. Epist. cap. xv. 'Et quidem de Sabbato magno, quod totius Creationis ' labores finiet, sex mille annis evolutis, summā animorum incli- ' natione, imò prono impetu consensum est.' D. Bernard. n. in eund. 'Imò fides communis Judæorum Christianorumque ve- ' terum, de sexies mille annis mundi ἀχείρες, quod constanter ' fuisse traditum non ardent negare vel iniquissimi temporum ' censores.'

it seems alone possible to account for the universality of its adoption by the Primitive Christians.

To the millennial state of rest which is to be hereafter enjoyed by the Church, there is the plainest allusion in the Epistle to the Hebrews :¹⁷ on the assumption of its truth the whole tenor and consistency of the author's reasoning is indeed wholly dependant. In the consciousness under which he wrote, that his readers were not unversed in the subject, we find a sufficient justification of the general terms under which he expresses himself respecting it. In adducing proof from scripture, that "a sabbatism remained to the people of God,"¹⁸ no doubt can be long entertained that the author's allusion is to the Great Sabbath, which the Jews commonly understood by the Millennium.¹⁹ On the authority of the Psalmist, who had shewn, that however this rest had been promised, it had never been enjoyed, he undertakes to establish, that it remained to be expected. In the course of his proof he reasons from the analogy of such a state of rest, and that which had been enjoyed by God at the time of the creation. A doubt has been, indeed, founded upon the inference of the Apostle, whether the rest from which God excluded the Israelites under Moses, with an oath, and which they had failed to attain under Joshua, as it remained unenjoyed until the times of David,

¹⁷ Heb. iv. 1—11.

¹⁸ Ibid. 9.

¹⁹ Fell, ubi supr.

were analogous to the state of repose which directly succeeded the work of creation.²⁰ But that the allusion of the author points to a sabbatism of a higher and different kind, will not long remain doubtful, when it is considered that the rest of the sabbath was not only experienced²¹ in the wilderness, but that of the jubilee and sabbatical year observed, on the settlement of the Jews in Canaan. And the Apostle, in a subsequent chapter, clearly shews, that the promises of God and expectations of the Patriarchs were directed, from the earthly Canaan, to 'a better country, and heavenly Jerusalem,' in every respect analogous to the abode which is assigned by St. John to the blessed, in his description of the Millennium.²² But the point seems to be placed beyond ambiguity by an Apostolical Father, to whom the translation of the Epistle to the Hebrews into Greek has been ascribed; and who was not only the companion of St. Paul, but has addressed his Epistle to the same people, and on the same subject, as the great Apostle.²³ St. Barnabas, while he delivers himself more fully respecting it, has established the connexion, which is merely intimated by St. Paul, between 'the sabbath of God,' and 'the sabbatism

²⁰ Vid. Wolf. Cur. in Epist. ad. Hebr. iv. 3. Vol. IV. p. 643.

²¹ Vid. S. Hilar. Tract in Ps. xci. col. 236. b.

²² Comp. Heb. xi. 16, xii. 22. Rev. xxi. 42.

²³ Wolf. ut supr. p. 592.

‘ reserved for his people.’²⁴ He accordingly shews, that the period of seven days was chosen by the Almighty, who might have at once called the creation into existence, as indicative of the term of seven thousand years, which he had prescribed to the world that he had created. The last day, as he intimates, was appropriated by God to repose from his works; as the last millennium would be consigned to a respite, for his people, from care and labor. And he justifies the analogy on which he reasons, by the authority and language of scripture, to which St. Peter has given a similar application, when apparently delivering himself on the same subject:²⁵ concluding, that, as ‘ one day was ‘ with the Lord as a thousand years,’ the world would be only oppressed with toil and sorrow for so many thousand years as days had been consumed in the work of the creation. With this illustration, the connexion in St. Paul’s reasoning becomes obvious and conclusive; which, without it, appears to be inconsequential and paralogistic. ‘ There remaineth therefore ’ reasons the Apostle, ‘ a sabbatism to the people of God. For he that ‘ is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from ‘ his works, as God did from his.’²⁶ ‘ The sabbath ’ being allowed, as St. Barnabas assumes, to be the type of ‘ the sabbatism;’ it was necessarily to be

²⁴ S. Barnab. Epist. cap. xv.

²⁵ Ps. xc. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 8. ²⁶ Heb. iv. 9, 10.

inferred, from 'the rest into which God entered,' that 'a rest remained to his people.' But this analogy not being pre-supposed, no conclusion can be directly deduced from the rest which the One enjoyed at the foundation of the world, that a rest remained for the other, at any subsequent period.

Although the allusion to the subject of the Great Sabbath in St. Peter²⁷ is sufficiently obvious, it is less strikingly marked than we have just observed in his brother Apostle. It deserves, however, to be remarked, not so much as a matter curious in itself, as illustrative of the plenitude of the scriptures, that the link in the reasoning of the one Apostle, which has been deduced from the epistle of his companion St. Barnabas, has been likewise supplied from the argument of the other; and that the application of the passage in St. Peter, in illustration of the text of St. Paul, is in some measure justified by the positive reference of the former Apostle to the writings of 'his beloved brother 'Paul, in which ' he particularly declares, ' there 'are some things hard to be understood, as there 'are also in all his epistles.'²⁸ But whatever conclusion be formed on this subject, it is atleast obvious, that, while St. Peter alludes to the time of the creation, from which the doctrine of the Millennium is deduced by St. Paul, and to the destruction and renovation of the earth, with which

²⁷ 2 Pet. iii. 2—13. ²⁸ 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.

it is connected in the Apocalypse by St. John ;²⁹ he asserts the analogy between the length of a day and the period of a thousand years, on which the certainty of that Great Sabbath was established, from its type in the sabbath. And when it is remembered, that the opinions held by the Jews on the subject were generally acknowledged by his readers, as their prevalence in the Primitive Church places almost beyond dispute ; a very slight allusion to the doctrine which was pressed on their attention by St. Barnabas, if not by St. Paul, was fully adequate to bring it under their consideration. It is indeed introduced to their notice, by the Apostle, with a reproach, and enforced by a repetition, which was at once calculated to awaken their attention, and recall their remembrance.

‘ For this ’ he declares, ‘ *they willingly are ignorant of*, that by the word of God *the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water* ’.... which ‘ are now by the same word kept in store, ‘ and *reserved unto fire* against the day of judgment ‘ and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be ‘ *not ignorant of this one thing*, that one day is with ‘ the Lord as a thousand years, and *a thousand years as one day*.... But ’ he continues ‘ the day of the ‘ Lord will come as a thief in the night ; in the ‘ which *the heavens shall pass away* with a great ‘ noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent

²⁹ Comp. 2 Pet. iii. 7. 10. 12, 13. Rev. xx. 6. 11, 12. xxi. 1.

‘ heat, *the earth also*, and the works that are therein,
‘ *shall be burned up* Nevertheless we, according
‘ to his promise, look for *new heavens and a new earth*,
‘ wherein dwelleth righteousness.’³⁰ To those who
were so far versed in the opinions on the Millen-
nium, which might be acquired from the Jews,
this intimation was not merely sufficient to recall
the subject, but to impress it with the full weight
of the apostolical authority.

For the doctrine of the Millennium there is
express authority in St. John, by whom the state
which the Church is to enjoy in the Great Sabba-
tism is explicitly mentioned, and circumstantially
described. He not only speaks of ‘ *the thousand*
‘ *years which were to be fulfilled*,’ and of those
‘ *who shall reign with Christ a thousand years*;’³¹ but
describes the great consummation with which it
will be attended, in the same language and images
in which it is described by St. Peter. In recounting
the concluding scenes of the Apocalyptic vision,
he delivers himself in nearly the same terms with
that Apostle; ‘ And I saw a great white throne,
‘ and him that sat on it, from whose face *the heaven*
‘ *and the earth fled away*; and there was found no
‘ more place for them. And I saw the dead small
‘ and great stand before God; and the books were
‘ opened.’ And death and hell were cast into
‘ the lake of fire. This is the second death. . . .

³⁰ 2 Pet. iii. 5. 7, 8. 10. 13. ³¹ Rev. xx. 3. 6.

‘ And I saw *a new heaven and a new earth* ; for the ‘ first heaven and the first earth were passed away ‘ And I John saw the holy city, the new Jeru- ‘ salem, coming down from God out of heaven.’³² But while the Apostle is thus explicit in defining the period of rest, as extending to ‘ a thousand ‘ years ;’ it does not directly appear how far the subject is identified with the lapse of the great week, from which the Millennium derives its character as a proper sabbath. The connexion may be, however, in a great measure supplied, in the contexture of the Evangelist’s subject ; in which the mystic emblems of the angels seals and trumpets, wherein it is clothed, as consisting precisely of seven, have a manifest reference to the sabbatical period and character.³³ As the subject of the Apocalypse embraces the whole course of time, and is distributed into seven periods, under those mystic symbols,³⁴ a single consideration seems to enforce the conclusion, that the Millennium, which constitutes the last, should be regarded as a period strictly sabbatical. In describing the period computed from the opening of the seventh seal,³⁵ in which it is included, the whole of the imagery is derived from the commencement of the semitah and jubilee, with the great day of

³² Rev. xx. 11, 12. xxi. 1, 2.

³³ Vid. S. Hilar. Prol. in Ps. col. 7.

³⁴ Burnet. Theor. ubi supr. p. 52. ³⁵ Rev. viii. 1—6.

atonement: the Evangelist thus determines its nature by the character of the periods, with which, as I shall soon take occasion to shew, it is identified in his descriptions.

As the doctrine of the Millennium was thus delivered to the Primitive Church, we find it was received by the early Fathers. In their notion, respecting the duration of the world for so many thousand years, the seventh of which, termed emphatically the Millennium, would be a sabbath of rest, they are very generally agreed; however they may differ in their notions of its nature, and the exact time of its occurrence. On the peculiar views of the chief of those writers, many of whom unfortunately suffered their opinions on the subject to be warped by Jewish prejudices, it is unnecessary at present to enlarge, as they have been extracted from their works by a learned writer,³⁶ whose particular hypothesis derives much of its weight from their authority. It will suffice at present to observe, that the opinion of the Primitive Church, respecting the nature of the Millennium, received more than a tinge of error, from the peculiar notions of Papias: for the statement of this writer acquired an undue authority, from his professing to transmit it, as a tradition imparted to him, by the immediate hearers of St. John;

³⁶ Burnet. Theor. B. IV. ch. vi. p. 246. De Stat. Mort. cap. ix. p. 222.

who received from his mouth what had been delivered on the subject by our Saviour.³⁷ But by those who had the opportunity of consulting his works, and were most competent to decide upon his pretensions, he is described as a person of mean parts and narrow judgment.³⁸ And although some of the earliest Fathers, not less misled by the speciousness of his professions, than an erroneous view of the Prophets, have inconsiderately acquiesced in his sentiments; by some of a later age, and more matured judgment, who have reviewed the subject under a freedom from the controversial prejudice with which it was at first debated, this statement has been censured, as not merely tinctured with error but heresy.³⁹ From this sentence it is however of importance to observe, we must except St. Barnabas, as well as the Elders of the Asiatic Church, from whom the Bishop of Hierapolis professed to derive his tradition on the Millennium; for an occasion will hereafter present itself for shewing, that the Apostolical Fathers mutually agreed, not less in the substance of their accounts, than in an exemption from the error which has been imputed to Papias. But by what-

³⁷ S. Iren. adv. Hær. V. xxxiii. § 3. 4. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. III. xxxix. 137, 11.

³⁸ Euseb. ibid. p. 137, 20.

³⁹ Euseb. ib. VII. xiii. p. 349, 29. S. Hier. in Ezech. xxxvi. Tom. IV. p. 214 a. Præf. in Es. cap. xxviii. 443 f.

ever shades the opinions of the Primitive Fathers may have been diversified, they have uniformly agreed in recognising the Millennium as a great sabbatism, or septenary period; and with little more in their testimony are we at present concerned. Such was clearly the opinion, not merely of Barnabas and Papias, but of Justin, Irenæus, Hippolytus, Melito, Nepos, and Victorinus, in the eastern Church;⁴⁰ and of Tertullian, Cyprian, and Lactantius, in the western.⁴¹ Of the later writers, who escaped the contagion of Jewish prejudices in their notions, we distinguish Origen, Ambrose, Hilary, Chrysostome, Jerome, and Augustine;⁴² though the opinion of the last of these Fathers seems to have undergone a considerable change on the subject of the Millennium.⁴³ But so uniform was the consent of the Fathers, in admitting its sabbatical character, that, in consequence of the Oriental Church having dated, after the chronology

⁴⁰ Just. Mart. Apol. p. 207, a. 208. a. b. Iren. ubi supr. n. ³⁷. Hippol. ap. Phot. cod. 202. Melit. ap. Hier. et Gennad. Cat. Scrip. Eccl. Nepos ap. Euseb. et Hier. ubi supr. n. ³⁹. Victorin. ap. Hier. in Ezech. xxxvi.

⁴¹ Tertul. adv. Marc. III. xxiv. Cypr. Exhort. Mart. cap. ix. Lactant. Div. Inst. VII. xv.

⁴² Orig. Hom. in Matt. tom. xvii. s. 35. Ambros. in Luc. ix. 28. lib. vii. c. 7. Hilar. in Ps. cxviii. 18. Chrysost. Hom. in Ps. vi. Hier. Ep. cxxxix. ad Cyprian. August. Civ. Dei. XVIII. liii. XX. vii.

⁴³ Conf. Aug. Ep. ad Cypr. et Civ. Dei XX. v.

of the Septuagint, the epoch of the Nativity from A. D. 5500,⁴⁴ the coming of Antichrist and the end of the world, were referred to the year 500 from the birth of Christ;⁴⁵ under a conviction that, after the lapse of 6000 years, the Millennium would commence with the year 6001 of the world.

From the preceding induction of authorities, I shall now venture to conclude, that the Millennium was not merely acknowledged by the uniform consent and uninterrupted tradition of the Jewish and Christian Church; but that it was recognised as a period of repose, which would be strictly sabbatical. Nor can it be solidly objected, in diminution of the proof on which the doctrine rests, that it is merely elicited, as a learned writer insinuates, ' by interpretation and inference; and ' that it must be acknowledged that there is an ' essential weakness in all typical and allegorical ' argumentations, in comparison of literal.'⁴⁶ It is a common objection to which all language is exposed, that it consists of merely arbitrary signs; between words, and the things which they represent, there is no necessary connexion, whether they are used with a literal or figurative meaning. But if we at all admit what I conceive to have been already proved, that the doctrine is maintained by the inspired authors of scripture; we must allow,

⁴⁴ Scalig. Emend. Temp. Lib. VII. p. 758. c.

⁴⁵ Hippol. ubi supra. ⁴⁶ Burnet Theor. ut supr. p. 51.

that they have established the connexion between the symbol and represented thing, or must admit their fallibility and error. I am, however, of opinion, that the subject is placed in a truer light, when it is assumed that they have given us, in place of the figure, its true interpretation, and have thus reduced us to the alternative either of admitting their exposition, or of rejecting the authority by which it is delivered. But it may be even doubted, whether it can be said, in strictness and propriety, that the doctrine of the Millennium, as associated with the institution of the sabbath, depends on an allegorical inference or deduction. From the analogy which may be traced between the greater and lesser festivals, I believe we should rather infer the harmony which subsists in the schemes of Providence ; and merely conclude that the Deity, in the institution of his sabbaths, whether of days years or ages, has acted on an uniform plan, and with a stated purpose.

The strongest and most unequivocal test to which a prophetical disclosure can be submitted, is that which *time* effects, in bringing the occurrence to pass which has been predicted : we are accordingly directed in scripture⁴⁷ to this criterion, as the proper touchstone of their pretensions who lay claim to a prophetical foresight. It is this quality which imparts to *a chronological proof* the conclusive force

⁴⁷ Deut. xviii. 22. 1 John iv. 1. Rev. ii. 2.

which has been already intimated ; as it is effected by a measured scale, which evinces the exact correspondence between the event which occurs, and that which has been predicted. To this method of establishing matters of fact, the character of demonstration rigidly applies ;⁴⁸ as the determination of the precise time of an event, or in effect the fixing of its date, involves not merely a proof of its occurrence, but at a specific period.

In the prediction derived from the school of Elias, the entire prophetical scheme is comprised, including the destiny of the world, from its commencement to its close, and extending to a period of six millenniums. The chronology of the successive events of which it has been the theatre, according to the best digested systems of the science, likewise embraces a period of nearly so many thousand years. As both schemes relate to the revolutions which have been effected in the religious opinions of mankind, by the revelation of different dispensations, the truth of the prophetical may be at once put to the proof, by contrasting it with the chronological. It is, however, almost impossible to conceive a harmony more beautiful and accurate than that which arises from the comparison. Nothing can, indeed, more happily accord with the prediction, respecting the distribution of the course of time by the different dispensations,

⁴⁸ Locke on Underst. B. IV. ch. ii. § 2. xv. § 1. Vol. II. p. 225.

than the testimony which chronology bears to the religious changes that have occurred in the period of which we retain positive records. In strict accordance with the Jewish prediction, we absolutely find the term of the world's existence divided into periods of two thousand years, by the birth of Abram and of Christ; under whom the divine dispensations were introduced, according to which the prophecy is distributed into millenary portions.

As the spiritual law was fully established by Christ,⁴⁹ the carnal was virtually introduced under Abraham;⁵⁰ the foundation of the Hebrew dispensation having been laid above 400 years before the institution of the burdensome ceremonial of Moses. By the patriarch, those rites which were fundamentals of the Mosaic Law were not merely observed, but by the divine appointment: he was not only enjoined circumcision, by which the Israelites were admitted into covenant, but sacrifice likewise, by which they maintained communion with the Almighty.⁵¹ And consistently with these views, on the delivery of the Patriarch's fleshly seed from the Egyptian bondage, God not only appeared in the character of the God of Abraham,⁵² but with the specific purpose of establishing them in the earthly Canaan.⁵³ The direct object of Moses'

⁴⁹ Heb. ix. 15. ⁵⁰ Rom. iv. 13. conf. infr. n. ⁵⁴ et ⁵⁸.

⁵¹ Gen. xv. 9., xvii. 7. 10.

⁵² Exod. iii. 6. 15. ⁵³ Ibid. 7. 17., vi. 8.

legation was consequently that of bringing the Hebrews, his descendants, three days' journey into the wilderness, that having received the rite of circumcision they might offer sacrifice to the Lord :⁵⁴ for the subsequent institution of the ceremonial was merely accidental, and in consequence of the transgressions of the people;⁵⁵ and the covenant which was mediated by Moses consequently intended to last but for a limited period.⁵⁶ It can therefore excite little surprise, that the legal expositors should have contrasted the state of the Israelites under Abraham and the Messiah ; and that it was a tenet of the traditionists, ‘ that the plantation from below was ‘ by the one, and the plantation from above by the ‘ other.’⁵⁷ The opposition in which they are placed is, indeed, so far acknowledged by the evangelical writers, that they have equally opposed the covenants which were respectively mediated by Abraham and Christ, under the titles of the carnal and spiritual circumcision.⁵⁸

The eras of the world’s duration, as divided by the contrasted dispensations, are, however, to be regarded not so much with a view to their moral

⁵⁴ Ibid. 12., vii. 16., viii. 8, 25. ⁵⁵ Gal. iii. 19.

⁵⁶ Heb. x. 9. Eph. ii. 15. Col. ii. 14. 16. 22.

⁵⁷ Mos. Haddersh. in Bereshith Rabba. נטיעת מלמכת זה נטיעת מלמעלת זה משיח. אברחות נטיעת מלמעלת זה משיח.

⁵⁸ Comp. Rom. xv. 8. Col. ii. 11. with Act. vii. 8. Gen. xvii. 9, 10.

opposition as to their chronological succession. And when determined by the most reputed system of Abp. Ussher, the epoch marked by the coming of Abram must be fixed in A. M. 2008,⁵⁹ and that distinguished by the advent of Christ in A. M. 4000.⁶⁰ In these dates, the distribution into periods of 2000 years, of the great sabbatical week preceding the Millennium, must be allowed to be verified, to a degree surpassing all expectation or foresight. But if the chronological scheme of J. Cappel be admitted, who professes to arrive at a higher degree of accuracy in his computations, by adopting a juster view of the patriarchal method of computing the course of time, the affinity between the prophetical and chronological distribution assumes a more extraordinary degree of precision. On considering the patriarchal year, as unequated and consisting of 365 days, and computing from the same data as Ussher; he reduces the distance between the creation and coming of Abram to 2003 years, and estimates the space of time from the same epoch to the advent of our Lord at 4000 years 160 days.⁶¹ But I have little hesitation in acquiescing in the antecedent calculation, as the more accurate, however the subsequent

⁵⁹ Usser. *Annal. P. I.* p. 6. ad A. M. 2008.

⁶⁰ Id. *ibid. P. II.* p. 531. ad A. M. 4000.

⁶¹ Cappel. *Chron. Sacr. conf. Sims. Chron. Cathol. Parasc.*
p. 19, 20.

may derive support from the consideration, that the Egyptians computed by the equable year, which Moses may be conceived to have adopted, as he was learned in all their wisdom. The Chaldees, however, adopted an equated year, for which the Hebrews, as Chaldees by descent, must have retained a hereditary partiality,⁶² particularly as it corresponded with their method of computing their sabbatical periods, which would have been wholly deranged by adopting an equable year. I am consequently of opinion, that this species of year was preferred by the sacred historian, in compiling the national history. According to this distribution, the following comparative scale will illustrate the prophecy derived from the school of Elias, and evince the extraordinary accuracy with which it has been accomplished.

PROPHETICAL SCHEME.		CHRONOLOGICAL SCHEME.	
	A. M.		A. M.
From the Creation..	1	The World created.	1
To the beginning of			
the Law	2000	Abram born	2008
To the Advent of the			
Messiah	4000	Christ born	4000
To the Millennium .	6000	The Millennium....	6000

In this distribution of the age of the world, a difference merely of eight years is discoverable

⁶² Scalig. Emend. Temp. Lib. IV. p. 297.

between the dates of the second epoch. But for this insignificant discrepancy, we are at once enabled to account, by the assistance of the last cited chronologists. They have respectively shewn, that, in the distribution of time, a providential regard was observed to its division by the jubilee-year, or great sabbath of sabbaths. And they have accordingly remarked the precise coincidence of two of these epochs, with the changes in the divine dispensations,⁶³ according to which the Great Mundane Week is divided in the traditional prophecy of the school of Elias. In thus marking the exact concurrence of Abraham's birth with the forty-first jubilee from the creation, they have furnished presumptive ground for concluding, why it should have been advanced, a few years beyond the date of the second Millennium. What adds still greater force to the analogical reasoning on which this conclusion is built, is the exact coincidence of the middle of the great sabbatical period of 6000 years,

⁶³ Cappel. *ibid.* p. 4. ed. Walt. "Porro cum Abraham natus sit Anno Mundi 2008 exeunte, vel 2009 ineunte, liquet eum natum esse in fine quadragesimi primi Jubilæi a mundi creatione." Usser. *ibid.* ad A. M. 4030. p. 566. "Jubilæus xxx et ultimus in annum D. N. Jesu Christi xxx incurrens et *principium Evangelii*, promulgandi jam per vocem clamantis in deserto; 'Parate viam Domini, complanate semitas ejus,' [Marc. i. 1, 2, 3.] atque Annum illum acceptabilem, sive divini beneplaciti tempus aperiens, quo Deus Optimus Maximus mundo patefacere dignatus est." [Esai. lxi. 2. Luc. iv. 19].

with the ninth jubilee, at one of the most memorable conjunctures of the Jewish history: for this remarkable epoch, which occurred at the distance precisely of 3000 years from the assigned date of the Creation A. M. 1, and of the Regeneration A. M. 6000, was distinguished by the visible descent of the Divine Glory in the Holy of Holies, on the dedication of the Temple, by Solomon, with great pomp and solemnity.⁶⁴

It is, however, the common subterfuge of infidelity, when pressed by a coincidence in facts, which leaves little further room for sceptical objection, to assert the accommodation of historical events to the descriptions of prophecy, or the fabrication of the prediction after the incidents which it pretends to foretell. It cannot, therefore,

⁶⁴ Usser. *ut supr. p. 58, ad A. M. 3001.* “ *Jubileus nonus,*
 ‘ *quartum Mundi seculum aperiens; in quo Templi Encænia*
 ‘ *magnificè à Salomone celebrata sunt. Congregatis enim ad*
 ‘ *eum omnibus Israelitis, mense septimo, Arca Sione in adytum,*
 ‘ *Tabernaculum ac vasa sacra Gibeone in thesaurum Templi*
 ‘ *deducta sunt. Ubi quum Deus presentiæ suæ signum aspect-*
 ‘ *abile edidisset; Salomon in suggesto æneo flexis genibus*
 ‘ *conceptas ad Deum preces effudit. Populo deinde benedicens,*
 ‘ *boum 22 millia, ovium 120 sacrificavit. Atque ita festo*
 ‘ *dedicationis altaris *septem diebus*, et festo Tabernaculorum*
 ‘ *aliis *diebus septem*, et octavo Tabernaculorum die celebrato:*
 ‘ *die demùm *mensis septimi* 23^o populus in tentoria sua dimissus*
 ‘ *“ est.” [1 Reg. viii. 1, 2—65, 68. 2 Chron. v. 3, 4, 5. vi.*
 ‘ *vii. 8, 9, 10].*

be deemed irrelevant, to point out the impossibility that fraud or management could have produced the extraordinary identity in dates, which has been instanced in the comparative scale already presented to the reader. The prophecy on which our deductions are founded, if it is sophisticated, must be ascribed to the Jews, as it is inserted in the compilation of their traditions ; but their scheme of chronology, if admitted to be true, can have no other effect but to prove the author of the prediction baffled in his foresight. 'The Jewish Computation,' which has been published by Scaliger, determines the date of Abram's birth as occurring in A. M. 1948, and the dedication of the Temple, as happening eight years after its foundation, in A. M. 2936.⁶⁵ From these dates, as falling in the middle of the century, it must be obvious the distribution of the world's age by periods of a thousand years can derive no support or countenance. Independant of the 60 years, which are thus wanting to bring the epoch of the foundation of the Law to A. M. 2000 (and if it is dated, according to their chronology, from the delivery of the Levitical dispensation by Moses A. M. 2448,⁶⁶ it must be carried 448 years beyond it) ; so far are the Jews from identifying the advent of the Messiah with A. M. 4000, that, dating A. D. 1831 as A. M. 5592, they

⁶⁵ Vid. Scalig. Emend. Temp. Lib. VII. p. 628.

⁶⁶ Id. ibid.

still live in a vain expectation of his coming. The difference, however, between their computation and that of Ussher, in both dates, of the birth of Abram, and dedication of the Temple, amounts in round numbers to 60 years. But in antidating both events so many years, their error may be directly traced, as that great chronologist has shewn,⁶⁷ to the false estimation of Abraham's nativity, whom they have erroneously considered, instead of Nahor, the eldest son of Terah; and have thus thrown back the time of his birth precisely 60 years, from A. M. 2008 to A. M. 1948.⁶⁸ When the time which has been thus erroneously withdrawn is restored, even this rude computation of the Jews will bring the most extraordinary confirmation to the accuracy of Ussher's chronology; which is rigidly founded on the patriarchal genealogies,⁶⁹ and may be proved to a demonstration, by the sabbatical cycle.

To us who have not only fallen in the last division of the great prophetic period, but have nearly arrived at its close, the last 2000 years are of the highest importance and interest. To this period the predictions contained in the Apocalypse properly extend. And as far as time has hitherto advanced

⁶⁷ Usser. *Annal. ut supr.* p. 6, ad A. M. 1948.

⁶⁸ Scalig. *Jud. Comput.* ubi supr. p. 628.

⁶⁹ Vid. *Whiston Theor. of Earth*, B. II. hyp. ix. p. 142.

in its course, we possess, in history, not only a proof of the truth of what is passed, but some earnest of the accomplishment of what is predicted.

The numbers adopted by the Evangelist, in the distribution of the last 2000 years of the great Mundane Sabbath, though variously denominated, may be certainly determined. They have been equally adopted in the predictions of Daniel and St. John, between whose modes of computation so exact a correspondence exists, as has been frequently the subject of wonder. 'Other prophecies 'there are,' as Dr. Burnet observes, 'that may be 'called *chronological*, as the treading under foot the 'Holy City 42 *months*, Apoc. xi. 2. The Witnesses 'opposing Antichrist 1260 *days*, Apoc. xi. 3. The 'flight of the Woman into the Wilderness for the 'same number of days, or for *a time, times, and half a time*, Apoc. xii. 6. 14. And lastly the war of the 'Beasts against the Saints 42 *months*, Apoc. xiii. 3. 'These all express *a time* for their completion, and 'all the same time, if I be not mistaken.'⁷⁰ To the same purpose Bishop Newton expresses himself, on 'the rise of the Antichristian power in the latter 'times of the Roman Empire,' observing that, 'It 'is not only foretold when it should prevail, but 'moreover how long it should prevail. Here 'as he proceeds, 'we cannot but observe, that the very 'same period of time is prefixed for its continuance

⁷⁰ Burnet Theor. ut supr. p. 52.

' by Daniel and St. John. Wonderful is the consent and harmony between these inspired writers, as in other circumstances of the prophecy so particularly in this.'⁷¹ Having coincided with Dr. Burnet in his exposition of this period, and particularly explained 'a time as a year, and "a time and times and the dividing of a time" as three years and a half, or forty-two months,' he concludes in these terms: 'From all these dates and characters it may be fairly concluded, that the time of the Church's great affliction, and of the reign of Antichrist will be a period of 1260. To fix the time exactly when the 1260 years begin, and consequently when they end, is a matter of some niceness and difficulty. And perhaps we must see their conclusion before we can precisely ascertain their beginning.'

But if the principles on which we have hitherto proceeded be not altogether fallacious, the conclusion of this period, as directly preceding the time of the Millennium, has been already identified with A. M. 6000. In assuming this date or its equivalent A. C. 2000 (which, from the error of four years in the vulgar era,⁷² corresponds with A. D. 1996) as a chronological basis, the required

⁷¹ Newton Dissert. ut supr. Vol. II. p. 410.

⁷² Vid. Usser. ut supr. P. II. p. 546. Petav. Rat. Temp. Praef. [p. 68] ed. Genev. Noris Epist. ad Pagi. p. 79. subnex. Dissert. de Epoch. Syromaced.

date is at once determined by merely subducting the given period of 1260 years. The epoch A. D. 736 which results from the subtraction, if I am not wholly deceived in my computations, must be consequently coincident with that of the great Antichristian apostacy, which was to subsist for so many years.

The Evangelist, however, employs a second number, amounting to 666, on the just estimation of which the chronology of his predictions in a great measure relies for the accuracy of its results. 'Here is wisdom,' he declares, 'let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man; and his number is *six hundred threescore and six.*'⁷³

The exposition which is generally given of these numbers is founded on the cabbalistic device, termed *notarikon*; by which two names are considered identical if they prove to have letters that produce the same sum, when taken with a numerical force. As the Hebrew and Greek characters have been used by vernacular writers, not merely as letters but numerals; and the amount of the characters in the terms *רִמְמִית* and *ΛΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ*, signifying *Roman* and *Latin*, is equivalent to 666; it has been consequently concluded, that such is the name of the power which the Evangelist has involved in this anagrammatic obscurity.⁷⁴ But

⁷³ Rev. xiii. 18.

⁷⁴ Newton Dissert. ut supr. p. 319.

notwithstanding the precedent of St. Barnabas, the authority of Irenæus and Hippolytus,⁷⁵ and the easy acquiescence of Newton, this puerility must be abandoned in decyphering the Evangelist's text; as unauthorised by the practice, and unsuitable to the dignity of scripture. Admitting this Rabbinical artifice to be neither unworthy of the inspired author, nor inapplicable to the passage which is before us, no more is conveyed under the enigmatical device than the Apostle discloses in a subsequent chapter,⁷⁶ where the Roman or Latin power is identified with 'the beast,' with a circumstantial accuracy of description, which leaves no room for misconception of his meaning. It has been, however, objected to this interpretation of the mystical number,⁷⁷ that it has been effected by a direct infraction of the principle on which it is founded; the orthography of the terms being palpably violated, while the method of numerical exposition requires that they should be literally preserved. The proper synomyms of the terms *Roman* and *Latin*, it cannot be disputed, are not *רומי* but,⁷⁸ not *ΛΑΤΕῖΝΟΣ* but *ΛΑΤÎΝΟΣ*,⁷⁹ which

⁷⁵ Barnab. ut supr. cap. ix. Iren. ut supr. V. xxx. 3. Hippol. Dem. Antichrist. Newton Dissert. ut supr. p. 319.

⁷⁶ Rev. xvii. 9, 10.

⁷⁷ Nimrod. or a Disc. on Hist. and Fab. Vol. III. p. 499.

⁷⁸ Buxt. Lex. Rabbin. f. 2229.

⁷⁹ Nimrod. ubi supr. It is no answer to this objection, to assert that *רומיות* is used in the feminine to agree with *רומי*, and

in numerical force amount respectively to no more than 257 and 661. If we would justify our claims to the wisdom which St. John pronounces necessary to the development of his meaning, I believe we must commence our inquiry into his secret purpose, by rejecting such cabbalistic trifling, as alike unsuitable to the gravity of the Evangelist's subject and character.

We must, therefore, have recourse to some principle of exposition more worthy the dignity of the prophetical style, and the solemn purpose of the Evangelist. As the literal interpretation, in which *the number 666* is taken as properly such, must of necessity agree most intimately with the text, and can diminish nothing of the solemnity of the subject, it is clearly entitled to a preference above all other modes of exposition. In this view, the number appears intended to mark the duration of the power, which is characterised by the Apostle in a subsequent description of its nature and qualities. According to the analogy of prophetical language a state is said 'to be numbered,' when its end is determined; thus of the realm of Belshazzar Daniel declares, 'God hath *numbered* thy kingdom

that *Λατινος* is an archaism: Newt. ubi supr. p. 319. We still remain to be informed why the Evangelist should desert the proper, to adopt the obsolete orthography; and why the Greek noun is not, equally with the Hebrew, put in the gender of *Θηλειος*.

‘ and *finished* it.’⁸⁰ St. John, whose close imitation of the Jewish Prophet has been already the subject of remark, in applying the number 666 to the beast, whom he describes as ‘ wounded to death’ and deprived of his authority,⁸¹ is thus to be understood as delivering himself in the same manner. There can be, therefore, no ground of doubt, as to the propriety of considering the ‘ number of the beast,’ as intended to mark the duration of his power and dominion. The diversity, in the mode of expression used by the Evangelist, is thus rendered accordant with the difference in his purpose; as on other occasions he describes the persecuting power of the beast, in the present passage he prescribes the term of its exercise.

The basis of our computation has been already fixed in A. M. 6000, corresponding with A. D. 1996. In the two sums 1260 and 666, amounting together to 1926, we have obtained a number, which, when subtracted from the basis, necessarily determines the first year of the term expressed by both numbers. On deducting, according to this principle, 1926 years from A. D. 1996, the remainder, expressing A. D. 70, consequently determines the epoch of the period of 666 years; and, as the Evangelist’s computation commences with this term, it determines at the same time the epoch of his entire computation. On the extraordinary date at which

⁸⁰ Dan. v. 26.

⁸¹ Rev. xiii. 3. xvii. 8.

we arrive by this process it will be sufficient at present to observe, that it marks the identical year of the destruction of the Temple.⁸² When it is remembered, that from this event the close of the economy of Moses, and the commencement of the dispensation of the Messiah, are alike dated by the Jews and by our Lord;⁸³ it will be readily conceded, that a more appropriate epoch could not have been chosen by the Evangelist for his computations.

From the determination of these dates, the distribution of the last period of the Great Sabbathism, during which the destinies of the Christian Church are revealed by St. John, may be now easily effected. The exactness with which the several numbers of which it is composed not only make up the sum of 2000 years, but, according to the septenary distribution of the world's age, precisely intervene between the time of our Lord's advent, in A. M. 4000, and the expectation of the Millennium in A. M. 6000, are surely not to be regarded with ordinary feelings of surprise. If the demonstration which they afford, as integral parts of one consistent scheme, be resisted as inconclusive, I must profess myself unacquainted with a mode

⁸² Usser. ubi supr. p. 698, ad A. D. 70.

⁸³ Vid. Is. lxiii. 9, 11. Matt. xxiv. 3, 15. Comp. Assyr. Expect. of a Great Deliver. p. 70, 71. n. ¹⁶⁵. Cramer. Goël Israel. P. II. Diss. in Is. ib. 8, 9. p. 243. Meyer de Temp. Cœn. Dom. p. 172.

of proof which is capable of enforcing moral conviction.

	YEARS.	A. D.	A. M.
Advent of the Messiah			4000
To the vulgar Christian era ...	4	1	4004
To the end of the Mosaic, and beginning of the Christian dis- pensation	70	70	4074
To the fall of the beast, and rise of Antichrist	666	736	4740
To the fall of Antichrist, and commencement of the Millen- nium	1260	1996	6000
Sum.....		2000	

The results at which we thus arrive by a strictly chronological deduction, receive no slight confirmation from the analogy which they bear to the conclusions that Bishop Newton attained by a historical induction. As far as the dates of the preceding scale fall within the term of years to which St. John's predictions extend, the main pivot, on which the Evangelist's prophetical scheme turns, is the epoch identified with A. D. 736: as from this date the earlier period of 666 years may be computed in ascent, as the later of 1260 years in descent. But of the historical character of the period comprising that epoch, the learned commentator delivers himself in terms which I shall venture to cite at large; not merely as corroborative

of the preceding conclusions, but as preliminary to the establishment of the epoch which I believe to be cardinal in the computation. After objecting to the year in which it is fixed by Mede, he proceeds to observe ; ‘ These 1260 years of the reign of Antichrist are not to be computed from his birth, or infancy, or youth ; but from his coming to maturity, from his *coming to the throne* ; and in my opinion their beginning cannot be fixed, consistent with history, either sooner or later than in *the eighth century*. Several memorable events happened in that century. In the year 727 the Pope and people of Rome revolted from the exarch of Ravenna, and shook off their allegiance to the Greek Emperor. In the year 755 he obtained the exarchate of Ravenna for himself, and thenceforwards acted as an absolute temporal prince. In the year 774 the Pope, by the assistance of Charles the Great, became possessed of the kingdom of the Lombards. In the year 787 the worship of images was fully established, and the supremacy of the Pope acknowledged by the second council of Nice. *From one or other of these transactions* it is probable, that the beginning of the reign of Antichrist is to be dated. What appears to be most probable is, that *it is to be dated from the year 727*, when, as Sigonius says, “ Rome “ and the Roman dukedom came from the Greeks

‘ “ to the Roman Pontiff.” Hereby he became
 ‘ *in some measure* ‘ a horn,’ or temporal prince,
 ‘ though *his power was not established till some years*
 ‘ *afterwards* : and before he was ‘ a horn ’ at all he
 ‘ could not answer the character of ‘ the little horn.’
 ‘ If then the beginning of the 1260 years of the
 ‘ reign of Antichrist is to be dated from the year
 ‘ 727, their end will fall near the year 2000 after
 ‘ Christ ; and at the end of the 6000th year of the
 ‘ world, according to a very early tradition of Jews
 ‘ and Christians, and even of Heathens, great
 ‘ changes and revolutions are expected both in the
 ‘ natural and *moral world* : and “ there remaineth ”
 ‘ according to the words of the Apostle (Heb. iv. 9.),
 ‘ “ a sabbatism ” or holy rest, “ to the people of
 ‘ “ God.”⁸⁴

While the principle for which I contend is here
 fully conceded, the computed term, A. D. 727,
 comes within nine years of A. D. 736, which I
 apprehend to be the true date, and which is at once
 attained by subducting 1260 years from A. M. 6000.
 This year falls within the pontificate of Gregory III.
 whose temporal aggressions extended, far beyond
 the usurpation of a petty dukedom, to the asser-
 tion of a supremacy over the head of the empire.
 To the coalition formed between this turbulent
 Pontiff, on his accession in 732, and the founders

⁸⁴ Newton ut supr. p. 412.

of the Carlovingian dynasty, we have the high authority of Machiavelli^{as} for imputing the temporal aggrandizement, and civil ascendancy of the papacy. From this confederacy, which commenced in Gregory's solicitation of aid from Pipin, against Aistolf, King of the Lombards, and his subsequent application for it in person at the French Court; the Florentine historian justly dates the transfer of the authority which had been wrested from the Emperor in Italy to the Pope. Two armies having been dispatched in succession, by Pipin, to Gregory's assistance, reduced the Lombard King to submission, and having deprived him of his dominions, enriched the papacy with the spoliation of the exarchate. In these events, as occurring just at the epoch which has been assigned to the manifestation of Antichrist, I am much deceived or we obtain the proper clue to the predictions in which St. John has described the rise of that power. The concessions of the Popes to the civil aggressions of the western Emperors were amply repaid by the recognition of the spiritual tyranny, which themselves usurped; and which, though at first merely felt by the common enemy to their ambitious schemes, soon extended itself over the sovereigns to whom they owed their elevation.

^{as} Vid. Machiavel. *Hist. of Flor. B. I. p. 6. tr. comp. Newt.*
ibid. p. 117.

But the authority of this celebrated historian and able divine is perhaps chiefly of value, as tending to shew, that in adopting a particular mode of computation, and fixing on a specific date, we have not followed an arbitrary principle, nor arrived at a groundless conclusion. The entire prophetic scheme of the Evangelist, as embracing the separate terms of 666 and 1260 years, offers a wider range to investigation. With this period we are besides most intimately concerned, as that in which our own lot has fallen. Of what has preceded our times, the greater part has become matter of historical certainty: and in the truth of what has happened we have the best earnest of the ultimate accomplishment of that which we are assured is in reserve. The interesting events, which are comprised within those years, constitute the leading incidents of the period of nearly 3000 years, to which the Evangelist limits his predictions. In dwelling particularly on a subject of such moment and interest, I shall require no apology for the length or minuteness of my investigation. The particular examination of the Prophet's diction and imagery is, indeed, indispensably necessary to the application of that strict chronological test, by which his scope and object may be definitively determined.

A general prepossession arises, at first sight, against prophecy, from the indefinite nature of its

descriptions, as delivered in figurative language. From the very arbitrary connexion which subsists between a sign and the object which it shadows, a latitude is opened to interpretation, which, it may be conceived, leaves the text subject to any sense with which it may be fitted by the expounder. But this objection is an exaggeration, and indeed, in the present instance, wholly void of application. As long as mankind are left to the exercise of a freedom of will, a mystic language becomes in a great measure necessary to the method of disclosure, which professes to point out what will be their future course of action. Were not this precaution observed, some would be found so weak as to aim at an anticipation of the designs of providence, and others so vain as to endeavour to render them frustrate. To obviate the numerous inconveniencies which might thus tend to derange the ordinary course of nature, it was wisely contrived the prediction should be so framed, that the incident foretold should not be apparent until it might be verified in that which was accomplished. While a symbolical language was admirably adapted to such a purpose, the signs of which it was composed might be so accommodated to the subject, as to remove the charge of ambiguity from the description. With this prudence the language of prophecy has been accordingly constructed. The symbols which it employs receive a definitive

character from the natural force of the language in which it is expressed, or from the intentional significance which it is assigned by the author. When 'a horn' is used to express a kingdom or state, 'a day' to signify one year, or 'a week' a period of seven; the trope is justified by the usage of the Hebrew, in which the original terms, thus employed, are capable of either signification.⁸⁶ When 'a beast' is put for a sovereign power, the figure is sufficiently justified by the analogy which takes the term 'horn' with a similar meaning. The context is, however, generally sufficient to determine the sense in which the image is employed; and when the circumstances of the case require explicitness, to remove all ground of doubt, the sense is often fixed by the interpretation of the author.⁸⁷ On the use of a few symbols thus appositely chosen, the whole mystery of the prophetical descriptions commonly depends; the beings which are consequently introduced into the scene of action being ascribed a part, which is at once suited to their nature, and expressive of the great events which they are intended to shadow. This natural principle, according to which the prophetical imagery has been framed, is so clear and intelligible, that whatever question has been moved, as to the identity of the persons or subjects implied, none has

⁸⁶ Vid. 1 Sam. ii. 10. Gen. xxix. 21. 27.

⁸⁷ Dan. viii. 20, 21, 22. Rev. xvii. 11, 12.

been raised as to their specific nature and actions. However it may be contested that the Prophet intended, under the image of 'the beast' which he beheld in his vision, to depict a dynasty of the Seleucidæ, or a succession of Emperors or Popes, it has not been seriously disputed, that under such a figure he meant to designate a profane and tyrannical power.

But whatever be the difficulties that may thus arise, from the obscurity of the prophetical language, they generally find an adequate solution, when submitted to the test of matter of fact, as preserved in historical narration. Directed by the light which it supplies, few inquirers, unless they have been turned aside by some indirect or private object which they had in view, have failed in attaining the purpose of their author. Its guidance has been judiciously followed by Bishop Newton, in his exposition of the Apocalypse, who has prudently availed himself of the learned labors of his predecessors. On the explanation which he has given of the figurative imagery used by St. John, in his description of the great Antichristian apostacy, I have consequently little more to observe than to profess my almost unqualified acquiescence in his conclusions. His deductions appear to me to be not only just, but to be established on evidence the most impartial and convincing.

On the identity of the seat of 'the beast,' which prefigures the antichristian power with the city of Rome, expositors, whatever be their creed, have so generally concurred in opinion,⁸⁸ as to remove all scepticism on the subject. The exposition of the revolutions in the civil power, which occasioned the transfer of the sovereign authority to different rulers, whom the Evangelist shadows under 'the beast having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns,'⁸⁹ is established on the most unimpeachable evidence;⁹⁰ as founded on the authority of a native Roman historian, who obviously wrote with no view to any theory that the author of 'the Dissertations' might have undertaken to establish. The successive changes in the government of Rome, from the Kings to the Emperors,⁹¹ are on those grounds determined, beyond dispute, by the testimony of Tacitus and Livy.⁹² It is thus equally placed beyond reasonable controversion, that the Evangelist in declaring that 'the ten horns are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet,'⁹³ depicts that state to which the empire was reduced, when it was partitioned into

⁸⁸ Burnet. Theor. ut supr. p. 118. Newton ut supr. p. 351. Nimrod. ut supr. Vol. III. p. 530. Possevin. Spicil. p. 28.

⁸⁹ Rev. xiii. 1. xviii. 8. 11.

⁹⁰ Newton ut supr. Vol. I. p. 276. ⁹¹ Rev. xvii. 10.

⁹² Liv. et Tacit. ap. Newton ib. p. 352. ⁹³ Rev. ib. 12.

ten kingdoms, after the irruption of the northern nations : for into so many sovereignties the impartial testimony of Machiavelli declares it was divided.⁹⁴ That by ' the beast that had two horns ' like a lamb, who exerciseth all the power of the ' first beast, whose deadly wound was healed,'⁹⁵ we must understand the Papacy, as usurping an ecclesiastical authority over the east and west, and invested with temporal power by the western monarchs, in whom the imperial authority revived, on the subversion of the kingdoms into which the empire had been partitioned, is not less apparent in the circumstances of the Prophet's description;⁹⁶ and, as I shall soon have occasion to shew, may be established by evidence not less impartial and conclusive. And finally, that by ' the image of ' the beast that had a wound by a sword,'⁹⁷ we must recognise the Popedom, as distinguished from the Papacy ; in other words, the state of the sovereign, as contrasted with that of the subject ; we shall have little reason to hesitate in allowing,⁹⁸ when we consider that this dignity has been held, not merely in the seat of empire, at Rome, but

⁹⁴ Machiav. ap Newt. ut supr. Vol. I. p. 279. 288.

⁹⁵ Rev. xiii. 11, 12.

⁹⁶ Newton ut supr. Vol. II. p. 310. Wolf. Cur. in loc. Vol. V. p. 540.

⁹⁷ Rev. xiii. 14.

⁹⁸ Newton ibid. Vol. I. p. 295. II. p. 313.

with the profane titles and idolatrous honors, which were arrogated by the Emperors, to whom the Popes have succeeded.

The symbolical language of the Prophet having undergone this literal version, we are here presented with a collection of facts, which remain to be tried by the test that has been already proposed, for eliciting a degree of certainty, unattainable by historical induction. Through chronology, as the science not merely of dates but of facts, as not less distinguished by its historical accuracy than its arithmetical precision, we are enabled to reach the highest demonstrative evidence. By the scale which it supplies, the descriptions of the Prophet, when divested of their figurative garb, and presented in the nakedness of the letter, may be measured in the minutest proportions. In submitting the entire prophetical scheme of the Evangelist to this criterion, I need hardly repeat, that, in proportion to the rigidness of the test, must the success of the result be considered conclusive.

Of the entire period through which the predictions of the Apocalypse extend, and which, exclusive of the time of the Millennium, embraces a term of 2000 years, we have the firmest chronological foundation. It is deducible from the epoch A. C. 1, from whence we date the ordinary progression of our years; respecting the accuracy of which chronologists have never differed above two

years, and on which they now very generally agree in opinion. It is, I trust, unnecessary to enter into any explanation why St. John has not computed from this date, the use of which was unknown in the Christian Church until the year 516 of the vulgar era. We are required rather to shew, that there were various and urgent reasons which rendered the year 70 of this era the fittest of which we can form any conception, for the commencing year of his computation. And independant of its falling within his own times, from which he would naturally commence his computations, we may observe its exact coincidence with the conjuncture marked by 'the abomination of desolation;' at which the Jewish polity was effectively superseded by the Christian dispensation. Nor can it be deemed the effect of an accidental concurrence, that the scheme of the Evangelist's prophecy is thus precisely comprised between the *destruction* of the old, and the *foundation* of the new Jerusalem, with the description of which his prophetic vision closes. For such, in effect, were the landmarks which our Lord, referring to the instance, and following the example of Daniel,⁹⁹ had set up, in drawing aside the veil which was interposed between that great catastrophe and the proposed consummation of all things.

⁹⁹ Matt. xxiv. 2. 15. 25.

The last prediction of Daniel, which is termed by its author 'the scripture of truth,'¹⁰⁰ admits of an obvious and natural division at this precise conjuncture. The judicious expositor of that prediction, whom I have hitherto principally followed in this investigation, has accordingly divided it at this point, and has made each of the parts the subject of a separate dissertation.¹⁰¹ In the last of them he specifically treats of the rise and progress of the Christian Church, within the express period which was bounded by 'the pollution of the sanc-
' tuary,' at the one extreme, and the great day of judgment at the other.¹⁰²

Our Lord has so palpably followed the same course, that the two events have a connexion in his prediction which has occasioned a considerable difficulty,¹⁰³ and which must appear to be forced, unless it is deduced from this accidental association with the prophecy of Daniel. In the question of his disciples,¹⁰⁴ which drew forth the prediction, it is implied, that their knowledge was not so limited, but that a slight intimation would give them some insight into his views, and enable them to follow

¹⁰⁰ Dan. x. 21.

¹⁰¹ Newt. ubi supr. Dissert. XVI. P. I. p. 351. P. II. p. 396.

¹⁰² Dan. xi. 31—xii. 4. Newton ibid. p. 397. seq.

¹⁰³ Newton ut supr. Vol. II. p. 11. 54.

¹⁰⁴ Matt. xxiv. 3.

him in the transition. As the key to the subject might be found in Daniel, it is suggested in the reference which our Lord makes to that Prophet.¹⁰⁵ Following his example, the divine teacher consequently fixes, as the limits of his prophecy, ' the ' abomination of desolation spoken of by the Prophet Daniel,' and ' the sign of the Son of Man.... ' coming in the clouds of heaven with power and ' great glory.'¹⁰⁶

It is thus little wonderful that we should find the same events in St. John not only comprised within the same limits, but, as far as the great apostacy was included in his subject, computed in the same term. We have already seen, that he divides the whole period to which his prophecies extend into two parts; the last of which, containing the defection of the Church, and including 1260 years, exactly corresponds in length with that which has been determined by Daniel.¹⁰⁷ In the antecedent part, including 666 years, he comprises the catastrophe of the last of the four prophetical empires; upon which a fatal blow would be inflicted, on the manifestation of Antichrist. The parallel is thus strictly preserved between the Jewish and Christian Prophet, though the scene

¹⁰⁵ Matt. xxiv. 15.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 15. 30. Vid. Newt. ubi supr. p. 29. 54.

¹⁰⁷ Comp. Dan. vii. 25. xii. 7. Rev. xii. 6. xiii. 5. Vid. supr. p. 29.

of their predictions is different; the one tracing the destinies of the Eastern Church, and the other those of the Western.¹⁰⁸ And it is perhaps on this account that the length of the earlier period, during which the Roman Empire should last, after the subversion of the Jewish polity and religion, though precisely defined by St. John, is not noticed by Daniel. He, however, accurately marks the basis from which it might be deduced, and suggests the retrogressive method of computing by which it might be elicited. In fixing the epoch at which the third of the prophetical empires would be divided into four kingdoms, he expresses it by a period, which, like that of St. John, would terminate with the close of the 1260 years, just at the time of the great consummation.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Newt. ut supr. p. 433, 434.

¹⁰⁹ See Dan. viii. 13, 14. Great difficulty has arisen with respect to the period of 2300 years, which the Prophet computes 'to the cleansing of the sanctuary.' It has been, however, justly determined by Bishop Newton, though he erroneously deduces this period, 'from Alexander's invading Asia, in 'A. M. 3670,' that '2300 years from that time *will draw* 'towards the conclusion of the *sixth Millennium* of the world; 'and about that period, according to an old tradition....great 'changes and revolutions are expected; and particularly, as 'Rabbi A. Sebah saith, Rome is to be overthrown, and the 'Jews are to be restored.' Newt. ubi supr. p. 348. If this event, designated by the Prophet as 'the cleansing of the 'sanctuary,' be fixed in A. M. 6000, and the retrogressive

The chronological test of the Evangelist's accuracy in his predictions consequently lies in the choice of the time at which the period of 666 years ends, and that of 1260 years commences, and which has been identified with A. D. 736. This year, as I have already intimated, falls within the time during which the papal chair was filled by Gregory III. The following account of his pontificate, which is extracted from an ancient chronologist, will fully establish the extraordinary prescience with which that year has been selected by the Evangelist. As the author was not only an ecclesiastic in the communion but a warm advocate of the Romish See, and wrote at a time when it not only remained

method of computing be adopted, 2300 years deduced from this basis will bring us to B. C. 300 ; the Nativity having occurred A. M. 4000, precisely 2000 of the 2300 years before A. M. 6000. On the death of Alexander, the fourth Monarchy was parted into five sovereignties; Thrace having fallen to Lysimachus, Syria to Seleucus, Macedon to Cassander, and Egypt to Ptolemy, as Newton observes (*Ibid. p. 330*); and, as he omits to notice, Asia Minor also fell to Antigonus, the natural son of Philip : *vid. Helvic. Tab. Chron. p. 73. c. d.* But after the battle of Ipsus, this kingdom was dismembered, and finally merged in that of the Seleucidæ and Ptolemies: *vid. Usser. ut supr. p. 460. d. ad A. M. 3703. Simson Chron. ad an. A. C. 299. p. 33.* The event, which thus fell B. C. 300, forms the proper epoch of 'the four kingdoms,' from whence the Prophet deduces the period of 2300 years to 'the cleansing of 'the sanctuary.'

uncharged but unsuspected of error by its votaries;¹¹⁰ his testimony, if adverse, will not be rejected as prejudiced. ‘Gregory, the third Pope of that name, ‘born of a Syrian father, succeeded Gregory the ‘second, and sat 10 years, 8 months, 24 days. A ‘man clearly of singular learning and eloquence, ‘sufficiently instructed in Greek and Latin, *and a strenuous defender of the orthodox faith*.... Therefore, having entered on the pontificate, he directly ‘held at Rome *a Council of nearly a thousand Bishops*, ‘in which (as was observed), *he deprived Leo of his empire, and of the communion of the faithful*, on ‘account of his having *demolished the statues and images of the Saints*. And he declared, in it, that *the veneration of the Saints* [and] *images was lawful*, and ‘denounced against the violators of this ordinance ‘the sentence of excommunication, as is found in ‘“*Canon de cons. Distinct. iii. cap. Perlatum.*”¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ Supplement. Chronicorum à V. P. Iac. Philip. Bergomate, ordinem Eremitarum Professo, conscript. Paris, 1535. Conf. ad A. D. 1492. fol. 411.

¹¹¹ Bergom. Chron. ad A. D. 732. fol. 246. vers. ‘*Gregorius ejus nominis tertius papa, Joan. patre Syro natus sedit annis 10, mensib. 8, dieb. 24. Vir plane singularis doctrinæ et eloquentiæ, et in lingua Græca quam Latina sufficienter instructus, atque orthodoxæ fidei acerrimus defensor.... Hic itaque pontificatu inito statim Concilium mille penè episcoporum Romæ, in quo quidem Leonem (ut dictum est) imperio simul et fidelium communione privavit, eò quod statuas et sanctorum*

He concludes his chronological notice under the same date, in the following terms : ‘ All the Visigoths and Goths, who long before this had occupied hither Spain and Gaul, at this time, according to Paulus Diaconus, from the want of assistance, fell into the power of Charles Martel. For King Luitprand sent over to Charles a large force in this war. And thus the kingdom of the Visigoths and Goths, *who for about 300 years had ruled in Italy Gaul and Spain, was subverted to the foundation, a few excepted, whom the Barcelonians liberated, from whence they were called Cattalans.*’¹¹²

As the measure of assembling this Council for deciding the Iconoclast controversy, which commenced in 725, was undertaken by Gregory on his accession in 732, its acts and decisions cannot with any show of probability be placed earlier or later than the date which has been assigned the great

‘ *imagines demolitus esset.* Declaravitque in eo *imaginum sacerorum* [que] *venerationem esse licitam*, et hujusmodi statuti violatores excommunicationis sententia innodavit, ut habetur in Cano. de conc. distin. 3. ca. Perlatum.’

¹¹² *Jd. ibid.* “ *Vesegothi et Gotthi omnes qui citeriorem Hispaniam Galliamque longè antè occupaverant, his temporibus teste Paul. lib. 6. auxilio carentes in Caroli Marcelli potestatem devener. Nam et Luitprandus rex huic bello ipsi Carolo multas copias transmisit. Ac sic Vesegothae et Gotthi, qui trecentis quasi annis in Italia Galliaque ac Hispania imperaverant, funditus deleti sunt, præter paucos, quos Barchinonenses liberaverant, unde et nunc Gottholani dicti sunt,*”

apostacy by the Evangelist. When, indeed, we consider the slow modes of conveyance for which those barbarous times were remarkable, and the numberless impediments to speed, with which many of the Bishops must have had to contend from age and infirmity; it seems impossible, that in a shorter space than three years, a summons of attendance could have been conveyed to above a thousand, that they could have assembled to nearly that number at Rome, and could have held and closed their deliberations. But this time, when added to the year of Gregory's accession to the pontificate, falls precisely in A. D. 736.

Had the author of the preceding chronological extract been empowered to fabricate a testimony, in confirmation of the Evangelist's prediction of the fall of 'the beast with seven heads and ten 'horns,' and of the rise of 'the beast with two 'horns like a lamb,' in 666 years from the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem; it is inconceivable that one more strongly corroborative of the truth of the prophecy could, by any ingenuity, have been invented. In that short passage, and under the same date of this ancient chronologist, we find the manifestation of Antichrist as plainly asserted, as the utter subversion of the last of the ten kingdoms, into which the Roman Empire was divided, previous to its dissolution. In the solemn recognition of idolatry as the established religion of the

Romish Church, by a council of her Bishops, under their ecclesiastical head, a public profession was made of that spurious Christianity, to clear a way for which the religion of Christ was virtually abolished. While, in the subversion of the Gothic kingdoms to their foundation, a deadly wound was inflicted on the persecuting power, which had continued in the ten kingdoms into which the Empire was partitioned, and which the Prophet had so circumstantially described under the symbol of ' the beast, one of whose heads was, as it were, wounded to death.'

Nor does the parallel end here, for precisely at this time the power and authority of ' the beast' revived, in the state which was instrumental in its destruction. By the victories of Charles Martel the foundation was now laid of the Western Empire, which was successively enjoyed by his son and grandson.¹¹³ In a very few years, a formal transfer of the empire, from the Greeks to the Franks, was made to Pipin, the son and successor of Charles Martel, by the Pope, to whom that prince paid homage, leading him to his palace by his horse's bridle.¹¹⁴ And Charlemagne, his successor and son, on acknowledging ' that the Apostolical See, ' the head of all, was to be judged by none,' was solemnly crowned by the Pope, and declared, in a

¹¹³ Bergom. *ibid. ad an. 746. fol. 245.*

¹¹⁴ *Id. ibid. ad an. 752. fol. 247.*

full synod of the Gallican and Italian Clergy, and with the acclamation of the people, ‘ Augustus and ‘ Emperor of the Romans :’ his son Pipin having been at the same time anointed King of Italy.¹¹⁵ ‘ And ‘ thus’ continues the chronologist already cited, ‘ Charlemagne re-assumed the Roman Empire, ‘ which was now almost decayed in Italy ; and ‘ having assumed the imperial dignity, he enacted ‘ new laws, which he willed should be observed ‘ through the Roman Empire, and commanded, ‘ by public edict, that *the Decrees of the Pontiff* ‘ *should be likewise obeyed.*¹¹⁶ Thus accurately was the prophecy not only fulfilled, but at the predicted time, respecting ‘ the beast with ten horns, one of ‘ whose heads was wounded to death, and *whose* ‘ *wound was healed* ; and the beast with two horns ‘ like a lamb, *who exerciseth all the power* of the first ‘ *beast before him.*¹¹⁷

Nor does the Evangelist appear a less faithful narrator of the political revolutions by which the period that he circumscribes within the 666 years, was convulsed, than of the characters of profane-ness and persecution by which it would be dis-

¹¹⁵ Bergom. *ibid. ad an. 796. fol. 249.*

¹¹⁶ *Id. ibid. ‘ Ac sic Carolus obliteratum jam penè in Italia*
 ‘ *Romanum Imperium reassumpsit; assumptaque imperii dig-*
 ‘ *nitate, Carolus novas leges conscripsit, quas per omnem*
 ‘ *Romanum orbem observari voluit, et Pontificis Decreta*
 ‘ *publico edicto item mandavit observari.’*

¹¹⁷ *Rev. xiii. 1. 3. 11, 12.*

tinguished ; and of which he defines the exact limits, in effectively placing its commencement in A. D. 70, and its termination in A. D. 736. During that term, in the course of which the Empire passed from the Romans to the Barbarians, it sustained its character, as a persecuting power, with a fatal consistency to the security of the Church. Not long previously to its epoch, the sanguinary work was projected by Nero, when he dispatched his general Flavius Vespasian to execute vengeance on the Jews, and to raze their city and temple to the ground.¹¹⁸ In the first persecution which that relentless tyrant instituted, about the same time, St. Peter and St. Paul were martyred, and multitudes of the Christians perished at the stake.¹¹⁹ During the reigns of his successors, to the times of Constantine, the Church was submitted to the fiery trial, through nine persecutions, in which an immense number sustained the horrors of death in torment.¹²⁰ Nor did it enjoy more than a temporary respite under that monarch, who was providentially raised up to save it from extermination. Even the prince, to whom it was indebted for its existence, soon lapsed into the errors of the Arians,¹²¹ to which

¹¹⁸ Usser. ubi supr. p. 692. a. conf. Lactant. de Mort. Persec. cap. ii.

¹¹⁹ Usser. ib. Simson. Chron. P. VII. p. 43. Lactant. ibid.

¹²⁰ Dodw. Chronol. Persecut. conf. Lactant. ut supra, passim.

¹²¹ S. Hier. Suppl. Chron. Euseb. p. 182. ed Scalig.

his successors were unfortunately addicted.¹²² And under them the spirit of persecution revived, though in a subdued and less terrific form: as they sentenced the Catholics, if not to death, to banishment from their territories, and obtruded heretics into their charge and function.¹²³ Athanasius, who was an early victim of this proscriptive fury, declares, that the authors of it were instigated by a spirit of infidelity, having been corrupted by the sceptical writings of Porphyry, and that the persecution excited against the Christians, was a conspiracy of the heretics with the pagans, for the utter subversion of their religion.¹²⁴ And Jerome, who lived to witness and deplore the judgments which immediately followed, on the descent of the northern nations, attests, how long this spirit prevailed, and how widely it was diffused through the population, as he asserts that to his own times they were universally polluted with heresy.¹²⁵ The irruption of the barbarians, whose domination in the Empire, after its partition, the Evangelist had not less accurately prefigured, brought with it a dreadful aggravation of these evils. By the hordes who now spread desolation wherever they

¹²² S. Hier. Suppl. Chron. Euseb. p. 182. ed. Scalig.

¹²³ Bergom. Chron. ut supr. ad A. C. 239. fol. 208. conf.

S. Athan. Hist. Arian. § 10. 17. 20.

¹²⁴ Id. ibid. § liv. lvii.

¹²⁵ Hier. Com. in Ezech. cap. viii. proem.

appeared, all the excesses which had been perpetrated by the first pagan persecutors, were visited with accumulated vengeance. The Goths, the Huns, the Vandals, and even the Longobards are represented as respecting neither age nor sex in their indiscriminate massacres.¹²⁶ To this system of devastation and terror the Church was exposed, as nearly as possible, for the period of 666 years; when an effectual termination was put to these excesses, on the reduction of the Lombards and extinction of the Goths, by the peaceable establishment of the Western Emperor and the Pope, in their vacated dominions.

In the coalesced power to which the remains of the imperial authority now passed, at the very epoch assigned to their origin, the same spirit revived, as the Evangelist has already foreshewn. On its nature, as idolatrous and tyrannical, it is unnecessary at present to enlarge, as a fitter opportunity will soon occur for entering on the subject; and as our national history bears the melancholy evidence of its character, in both qualities, engrained on its pages in letters of blood.

The *close* of the first period of 666 years, to which St. John's prophecy extends, it must be therefore admitted, is marked with a precision not less wonderful than that by which we formerly observed

¹²⁶ Bergom. ut supr. ad A. C. 338. fol. 206, 207. A. C. 593. fol. 235. A. C. 754. fol. 247.

its *epoch* was distinguished. Had the Evangelist's claims to inspiration rested on no other evidence; in the accuracy with which he has predicted occurrences, so immeasurably placed beyond human calculation or conjecture, they must have been established beyond controversion or doubt. And in the extraordinary events which thus verified his predictions, we retain, at this day, evidence not less strong, though perhaps less striking, of the direct intervention of a power superior to nature, than they had who were eye-witnesses of the miracle which he wrought, in conjunction with St. Peter, on the mendicant who lay at the gate of the temple.¹²⁷ Nor can the method of proof, by which their accomplishment has been established, be denied the claim of strict demonstration. The similarities which are commonly traced between prophetical revelation and historical narrative can but enforce moral conviction; as merely possessing a relative agreement they prove a coincidence, but do not establish an identity. But when expressed in time, they are reduced to positive homogeneous quantities, and are consequently appreciable by a common standard of measure. And in this form they become legitimate subjects of strict demonstration. The proof which the mathematician effects derives its conclusiveness solely from the employment of such a measure of quantity.¹²⁸ The

¹²⁷ *Acts* iii. 11.

¹²⁸ *Vid. Locke ubi supra.*

geometrician can, by no other mode of eviction, shew the equality of the three angles of a triangle to two right angles, or evince the truth of any theorem which he professes to demonstrate. The mechanic, when he undertakes to establish the agreement of his measurement with the dimension of an object of which he takes the size, adopts no other method but that of shewing, by the application of his rule, the exact correspondence of their respective proportions.¹²⁹ A method of demonstration, in every essential respect the same, having been employed in the preceding deductions, I cannot perceive how the results at which we have arrived can be denied to be equally conclusive.

Having thus far considered the first period of 666 years, to which the Apocalyptic prophecies extend, our enquiry is necessarily directed to the second, of 1260 years, by which it is directly succeeded. On the just estimation of the latter term, it is very generally agreed,¹³⁰ properly depends the computation of the probable time of the Millennium. As both periods have a common point of contact in A. D. 736, the *epoch* from which the latter of them is deduced has been necessarily established, by the method of proof by which the *close* of the former has been established. Of the events which have succeeded that date, a great part has become matter of historical certainty; and, as preserving

¹²⁹ Vid. Locke ubi supra.

¹³⁰ Vid. supra. p. 29, 30.

an exact correspondence with the author's predictions, has so far contributed to multiply the proofs of his inspiration. But respecting a large portion which remains to be fulfilled, in which also the particular period of the Millennium is included, we have no evidence that it will be eventually fulfilled, different from the earnest which we have thus received of his infallibility. It thus becomes to us an object of faith, not matter susceptible of demonstration. Of this description is not only the whole period of 'the 1000 years that 'must be fulfilled,' but a part of the 1260 years by which we are assured, that time of righteousness and peace will be directly preceded. Both of these periods refer to the state of the Church; the one as it shall finally flourish under the dominion of Christ, the other as it is oppressed under the usurpation of Antichrist.

In contrasting these different conditions of the Church, as existing in a state of righteousness under Christ, and of apostacy under Antichrist, the Evangelist assigns them a different seat of dominion, representing the throne of the one as raised in the new Jerusalem, and of the other as set up in Babylon.¹³¹ A late writer, into whose motives it is not difficult to penetrate,¹³² has sought

¹³¹ Rev. xvii. 5. 9. xxi. 2, 3. 22.

¹³² Vid. Nimrod. ut supr. Vol. III. p. 536. seq. Comp. ib. p. 322, 323. Vol. I. p. 10, n. 6. &c.

the grounds of this opposition in some remote and recondite mythological causes. He supposes the Evangelist, in establishing the contrast, had a principal regard to the demon of war which had originally gone forth from the one city, and the spirit of peace which would finally issue from the other.¹³³ With that insidious address, for which the advocates of the same cause have become unfortunately notorious, he seeks to divert the attention from the plain purpose of the Evangelist, by insisting, on several irrelevant particulars, to justify the contrast. 'It was at Babel,' he accordingly observes, 'that the discord of tongues began, ' and it was at Jerusalem that the Lord of tongues ' was again manifest, in order to communicate one ' truth to the dissonant nations.'¹³⁴

That the contrast, however, which the inspired author has intended is not civil, political, or mythological, but properly religious and moral, he has himself placed beyond all doubt, by the explicitness of his language and images. With just as little regard to the Babylonian Semiramis as to our Lady of Loretto, he directly contrasts the pure and the adulterated Church, under the personification of 'a *bride*' and of 'a *harlot*',¹³⁵ opposing the virgin purity and timidity of the one, to the profaneness, profligacy, and cruelty of the other.

¹³³ Nimrod. Vol. I. p. 330. ¹³⁴ Ibid. p. 340.

¹³⁵ Rev. xvii. 5. xxi. 2.

In the choice of the two cities which he selects to prefigure the different places of their abode, regard was, however, had by the Evangelist, not merely to their moral qualities, but to their civil relations; the state of captivity and subjection to which the Church of God and the Lamb was reduced in the one, being contrasted with the circumstances of triumph and peace to which it would be raised in the other.

That under the mystical Babylon the city of Rome is imaged, the Evangelist has rendered so little disputable, by the circumstantial nature of his description, that notwithstanding the consequences that it entails on the Church, which has chosen it as the seat of her authority, many of its members are forward to admit it.¹³⁶ With such accuracy and truth are the local peculiarities selected by which the iniquitous city is identified, that they are precisely the same which a skilful antiquary would choose, to characterize it in his descriptions.¹³⁷ We find it consequently designated in both, in nearly the same terms; as the eternal Rome, the queen of cities; and graphically depicted as built on the seven hills, and situated over sewers and aqueducts.¹³⁸ So little calculated, in fact, was the likeness to be mistaken or overlooked, that long

¹³⁶ Vid. *supr.* p. 44. n. ⁸⁸.

¹³⁷ Vid. *Pitisc. Lex. Antiq. Rom.* Vol. II. p. 634.

¹³⁸ *Comp. Rev. xvii. 9. 18. xviii. 7.*

previously to the rise of the apostate power, which has erected its throne on the seven hills, the early Christians recognised the metropolis of the West in the Babylon of the Apocalypse.¹³⁹ And, indeed, a like substitution of the one city for the other, in the mystic language of the Jews,¹⁴⁰ adds no slight confirmation to the supposition ; as it justifies the conclusion, that they have adopted the figure from a common source with the Apostle, or that the principle of association on which it depends was so obvious, as to have struck their common observation.

The seat of the Antichristian power thus appearing to be fixed at Rome, and the epoch of its rise having been proved to be coincident with the instauration of idolatry in that city, as the established religion ; nothing seems wanting to complete the evidence, that from that date we must compute the commencement of the great apostacy, which shall not surpass the limits of 1260 years, as we are assured, before the opening of the Millennium. It will, however, contribute not merely to render the proof irrefragably strong, but to illustrate the Evangelist's description, to shew in detail, that the qualities of moral pravity, by which he declares the great apostacy will be distinguished, may be plainly discovered in that corrupt Church, which

¹³⁹ Vid. ut supr. p. 32. n. 75

¹⁴⁰ Shir. Hasshir. fol. 83. conf. Schötg. ut supr. p. 1125.

has succeeded to the throne of pagan Rome, and has been generally identified as the mystical Babylon.

Whatever be the difficulties in which the Evangelist's subject may be conceived to be involved, there is little room for dispute as to the characters of moral gravity by which the Antichristian defection of the Church should be rendered notorious. The qualities of moral turpitude by which the mystical Babylon should be distinguished are described by the Evangelist, as 'abomination, fornication, and 'blasphemy.'¹⁴¹ That by the two first of these attributes, idolatry and polytheism are generally meant in the language of prophecy, very fully appears from the descriptions of the inspired writers, and is indeed usually recognised as their proper force, by the commentators who have most effectually cleared up their obscurities. The term 'abomination' is not only bestowed on the *idols* into the veneration of which the Israelites were seduced,¹⁴² but is particularly applied to the profanation which the Temple underwent, by the introduction of images into the sanctuary.¹⁴³ Such is the sense in which even the expositors in the Romish communion admit the term to be used in Scripture.¹⁴⁴ That under the term 'fornication,'

¹⁴¹ Rev. xvii. 3, 4, 5.

¹⁴² 2 King. xxiii. 13. Ezech. vii. 20.

¹⁴³ Dan. ix. 27. Matt. xxiv. 15. Conf. infr. n.¹⁴⁴.

¹⁴⁴ Possin. Spicil. Evangl. § 3. 'Facile convenit inter inter-

the apostacy of the Jews to the worship of other gods beside the Lord is proscribed, seems to be not less generally allowed; as that gross and shameless practice formed a rite of initiation and communion in those execrable superstitions.¹⁴⁵ Of the various kinds of ‘blasphemy’ against which the divine displeasure is denounced, one is proscribed in Scripture, as an avoidance and usurpation of the sovereignty of God, which comes more immediately within our purpose. The Jews, in rejecting our Lord as the expected Messiah, urged the commission of this sin, as their plea for abjuring his authority: ‘They answered him, saying, for ‘a good work we stone thee not, but for *blasphemy*; and because that *thou being a man makest thyself God.*’¹⁴⁶ To these vices, by which the Apostate Church, which is personified under the mystic Babylon, was defiled, the Evangelist adds

‘ pretes tam Danielis quam Evangeliorum ‘ abominationem’ ‘ hoc loco Matt. xxiv. 15. *idolum* intelligi. Vice omnia unum ‘ adscribam Severum, qui in Catenâ in Danielem nondum editâ ‘ quam penes me habeo &c.... Non est igitur dubium, quin ‘ abomination’ hoc loco *idolum* intelligatur. Per ‘ locum auctem ‘ sacram,’ cuius hic mentio est aliud quam Templum Ierosolymitanum designari non sinit nos credere testimonium recitatum ‘ Danielis. ‘ Et erit,’ inquit, ‘in Templo abominationis desolationis.’

¹⁴⁵ Hos. iv. 12, 13. Isai. xxiii. 17. Conf. Seld. de Dis. Syr. Synt. II. cap. ii. p. 237. Spencer. de Leg. Hebr. Lib. II. cap. iii. s. 4.

¹⁴⁶ John x. 33. Conf. Possin. ut supr. § 22. p. 52.

the charge of *persecution* ; which he urges in terms so forcible and express, as to require no explanation : ‘ And I saw the woman drunken with the ‘ blood of the saints, and with the blood of the ‘ martyrs of Jesus ; and when I saw her, I won- ‘ dered with great admiration.’¹⁴⁷

After the total extinction of Paganism, as a religion of the state, it seems to surpass all bounds of moral credibility, that if it ever revived, it should appear in the name, and under the form of Christianity. As the prohibition of *idolatry* and *polytheism* had been explicit at the first dawn of Revelation, it is not less inconceivable, that after ‘ the Sun of Righteousness had risen,’ and the world had enjoyed the noon-day light of truth, it should be again involved in the darkness of heathen superstition and error. In the strictest accordance, however, with what the Evangelist’s foresight had prescribed, it raised its head, in the former seat of its authority, at the time which had been foreseen, and under the character and appellation which had been plainly predicted. The manifestation of Antichrist, in the pontificate of Gregory III., was marked, as we have already observed, by the public acknowledgement of idolatry and polytheism, as the established religion of Christendom, though under the softened terms of ‘ the veneration ‘ of saints and images.’ As if casuistry could frame

¹⁴⁷ Rev. xvii. 6.

any distinction, which was not merely verbal, between those sins, and the act of prostration in prayer before images, or in the invocation of saints. As if any real or essential difference could exist between such acts of religion, when accompanied with veneration and invocation of the person who was addressed. As if the beings thus invoked, under the form, and in the manner which God exclusively vindicates to himself, if they were at all capable of hearing and answering the address, must not be omnipresent and omniscient ; and of course, as possessed of the attributes of the Divinity, must not be essentially gods. Yet we find, that the errors which were thus publicly recognised, have been, from that time to the present, enjoined by canons, ratified by councils,¹⁴⁸ and incorporated in creeds ; and that this intolerant Church compels the members of her communion, to avow them under the most solemn form of adjuration. ‘ I firmly assert,’ are the words of the confession thus profanely enjoined, ‘ that the images of Christ and of the ‘ Deiparous and ever Virgin, and also of the other ‘ saints, are to be had and retained, and that due ‘ honour and *veneration is to be paid to them.* Like- ‘ wise I hold that *the Saints*, reigning together with ‘ Christ *are to be venerated and invoked*, and that

¹⁴⁸ Concil. Trident. Sess. IX. Tit. ‘ De invocatione, veneratione, et reliquiis sanctorum, et sacris imaginibus.’

‘ they offer prayers to God for us, and that their
‘ reliics are to be venerated.’¹⁴⁹

Yet this charge of *polytheism* is venial when compared with the heavier accusation which has been not merely advanced by opponents, but incautiously admitted by friends. For it is even objected, to the profane service of this corrupt Church, that many of the deities which were once worshipped by the heathens, still retain their place in the calendar, and are now admitted, under the character of Christian saints, to the divine honors conferred on the confessors and martyrs.¹⁵⁰ And as the temples dedicated to their worship have been consecrated to the purposes of Christianity, by rites not essentially differing from the superstitions of paganism;¹⁵¹ the ceremonial and festivals of the false religion have been transferred into the churches of the true, having undergone little alteration but in the mode of their appli-

¹⁴⁹ Confess. Trident. ex Bulla Pii IV. ‘ Firmissimè assero
‘ imagines Christi, ac Dei-paræ semper Virginis, nec non aliorum
‘ Sanctorum habendas et retinendas esse, atque eis debitum
‘ honorem ac venerationem impertiendam. Similiter et [teneo]
‘ Sanctos unà cum Christo regnantes, venerandos atque invo-
‘ cандos esse, eosque orationes Deo pro nobis offerre, atque
‘ eorum reliquias esse venerandas.’

¹⁵⁰ Newton ut supr. Vol. II. p. 304, 305. Nimrod. ut supr.
Vol. II. p. 635. 641.

¹⁵¹ Seld. de Synedr. Lib. III. cap. xvi. § 1.

cation.¹⁵² Nay emulating the superseded religion, in the grossest and most profane superstitions by which it was debased, with an infatuation for which it is difficult to account, the Romish Church has not left the last quality unappropriated, by which the mystic Babylon was rendered infamous. To justify her title to ‘the blasphemy,’ by which, among other marks of moral turpitude, the great apostacy would be distinguished, she has raised up, in the Pope, a living ‘image of the beast.’ To him who, as the successor of the Emperors, challenges the appellation of Sovereign Pontiff,¹⁵³ their idolatrous honors have descended, along with their profane titles. Nor is it necessary, in substantiation of this charge, to cite the instances of profane folly, in which he has been assigned the name and attributes of the Divinity; or to appeal to the impious mockery of the rite with which his inauguration is attended. We may pity, as frantic raving, the epithets applied to him, when termed, ‘our Lord God, the ‘Pope;’ or smile at the drivelling fatuity, with which, when seated on the altar after his accession, he receives the adoration of the cardinals.¹⁵⁴ The charge of ‘blasphemy’ to which the Romanists lay their Church open, is indeed fully incurred in

¹⁵² Middlet. Let. from Rome, on Conform. of Poper. and Paganism.

¹⁵³ Vid. Seld. de Synedr. Lib. I. cap. x. p. 178. sq.

¹⁵⁴ Newton ut supr. Vol. II. p. 113, 114. 398.

the language in which his universal supremacy is sometimes asserted : for between that sin against the majesty of God, and the terms in which the universal domination of his ' Vicar ' is maintained, it is not possible to discover any real distinction. ' The Pope ' they fearlessly avow, ' has by divine ' right most full power over the whole earth.... ' he is by divine right directly Lord of the uni- ' verse.'¹⁵⁵ Let us give to this language whatever name we please, it is impossible to render it, in reality, anything different from ' blasphemy.'

But it is not merely in its character, as an invasion of the supremacy of the Father, but also of the Son,¹⁵⁶ that this impious usurpation is to be considered. It is not merely in its atheistic capacity that it is to be regarded ; as rendering void the sovereignty of the Most High in giving his glory to others, with a direct violation of his command, to have no other god but Him, not to bow ourselves down before an image. We have still to regard the ecclesiastical Head of this Church, as invading the royal and sacerdotal character of the Mediator, by which he particularly appropriates to himself the title of Antichrist.

The writers who have applied themselves to expose the tyranny of the papal usurpation, have

¹⁵⁵ Pesant. de Immun. Eccles. p. 45. Conf. Casaub. on Lib. of Church. Hickes's Chr. Priesth. Append. vi. p. cxlii.

¹⁵⁶ Vid. Seld. ut supr. p. 176.

constantly objected its encroachment on the supremacy of Christ. Of him, ' whom the Father hath given to be head over all things to the Church,¹⁵⁷ to whom he has committed the oecumenical dispensation until it is perfected in glory,¹⁵⁸ they assert it to be the eternal, inalienable prerogative, to unite in his person, as ' a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech,¹⁵⁹ the regal and pontifical character.¹⁶⁰ And the apologists of the papal usurpations, have found so little to advance in detraction from these claims, that they have admitted them without reservation.¹⁶¹ But from the time to which we refer the manifestation of Antichrist, the Pope has fearlessly exhibited himself, as an intruder into this dignity. The title of ' Vicar of Christ,' can have no meaning if it does not signify the substitute of Christ: but under this title, the formal recognition of the Pope, as the successor of Peter, is exacted from the members of his Church, under the most solemn mode of adjuration. ' To the Roman Pontiff, *the Vicar of Christ*, the successor of blessed Peter, prince of the Apostles, I promise and *swear* true obedience.'¹⁶² Although it must

¹⁵⁷ Eph. i. 22. ¹⁵⁸ 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25. ¹⁵⁹ Heb. v. 6.

¹⁶⁰ Casaub. *ubi supr.* p. clv. clvi. clviii.

¹⁶¹ Nimrod. *ut supr.* Vol. I. p. 18, 19. 339, 340.

¹⁶² Confess. Trident. *ut supr.* ' Romanoque Pontifici, B. Petri Apostolorum principis successori, ac *Jesu Christi Vicario*, veram obedientiam spondeo ac *juro*.'

necessarily follow from the nature of vicarial representation, that the principal is in reality superseded, and the substitute invested with the authority which is resigned;¹⁶³ 'the Vicars of Christ' do not depend in the usurpation of this authority on merely negative claims. They have not only invaded the priestly function of Him whose place they impiously presume to supply, in asserting their right to an universal episcopate; but they have usurped the royal, in arrogating a civil supremacy over the Emperor, who, at the very epoch of the great apostacy, was not only excommunicated but formally deposed.¹⁶⁴ Not to insist on the abolition from their allegiance, which they have given to the subjects of princes; even of the more moderate Pontiffs, who, while they set themselves in the throne of Antichrist, have acknowledged a distinction between the civil and ecclesiastical supremacy; all have implicitly usurped this mixed authority, which is the indefeasible prerogative of Christ. Not merely in renouncing all temporal subjection, while they asserted a spiritual supremacy over princes; but in freeing their subjects, if ecclesiastics, from their obedience, and asserting their right to summon them to councils, has the impious claim been *ipso facto* advanced.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ Nimrod ut supr. Vol. III. p. 507, 508.

¹⁶⁴ Vid. supr. p. 52. n. 109.

¹⁶⁵ Vid. Casaub. ut supr. p. cxli.

It has been nothing more than consistent, that the authority which has been thus founded in usurpation, should be maintained by tyranny, and extended by persecution. Of the adulterous Church which has been prefigured by the Evangelist, under the harlot of Babylon, it has been accordingly declared, that she should satiate herself with the blood of the martyrs.¹⁶⁶ The transfer of the civil authority from pagan to christian hands, it might be reasonably supposed, would lead to the introduction of a more mild and tolerant sway. 'The beast' in which it was imaged has accordingly assumed the semblance of christian forbearance: though it had horns, they 'were like the horns of a lamb.'¹⁶⁷ But having formed a coalition with the civil power, in which the spirit of paganism had revived; having engaged in alliance with 'the beast that was and is not and yet is';¹⁶⁸ the secular arm was soon summoned in aid of the spiritual usurpation of the Church.¹⁶⁹ She signed the victim's doom, and delivered his sentence, but avoided the odium of the execution. Those who disavowed her supremacy, and disclaimed her communion, were accordingly dealt with as rebels against her authority. Orders, religious and military, were embodied for their conversion or suppression;

¹⁶⁶ Rev. xvii. 6. ¹⁶⁷ Ibid. xiii. 11. ¹⁶⁸ Ibid. xvii. 8.

¹⁶⁹ See Observ. on Concess. to the R. C. Claims, p. 11. n.*
p. 19. n. †.

and they were given up, under the denunciation of heresy, to the fanatical zeal of crusades.¹⁷⁰ By the engines of destruction with which they were now assailed multitudes perished, that infinitely outnumbered those, whom the fury of paganism had cut off.¹⁷¹ Delivered up to the sword and the faggot, the inquisitor and the soldier, they were swept away, in the indiscriminate slaughter of war and massacre: until this exterminating fury was suspended by the reformation, since the dawning glory of which, the warring elements have subsided into a calm. The usurpation, indeed, has not been resigned, nor the intolerant spirit disavowed; although the power to maintain and extend it has been fortunately restrained. The flame of persecution has been stifled; but a fire still lurks in the embers, to rekindle which, should the fuel be administered, will require little more than a breath.

By such palpable marks has the coming of Antichrist been proved, that with the exception of those whom God has given up to strong delusion, from their predisposition to be deceived, few have been found to entertain a doubt as to his identity. Even among the members of his own communion, the Sovereign Pontiff has found some, who have openly denounced him as the predicted person.

¹⁷⁰ Usser. de Stat. et Success. Eccles. p. 260, 261. sq.

¹⁷¹ Clarke's Martyrology, p. 83. 86. 113, &c.

When a Christian Prelate first assumed the title of Universal Bishop, the usurper was denounced, from the papal chair, as the precursor of Anti-christ.¹⁷² Nor has the Pope, in his encroachment on the divine supremacy, failed in finding among the very Bishops in his communion, those who have accused him of verifying; in his person, all that had been foretold of that mysterious being.¹⁷³ Nay so palpable is the resemblance, that the civil and ecclesiastical sovereigns, who shared between them the Imperial territory and power, mutually recognised each other in the faithful description of the apocalyptic Prophet. It is indeed amusing to find Pope Gregory IX. pointing at the Emperor Frederick II., as 'the beast that rose up out of 'the sea; and the Emperor retaliating on the Pope, with the charge, that he was 'the Antichrist 'who deceived the world.'¹⁷⁴ A particular Pope has been occasionally selected for his enormities, as the person in whom the adversary of Christ had manifested himself; and a justification of the choice deduced from 'the Revelations.'¹⁷⁵ So plain a con-

¹⁷² S. Gregor. Lib. VI. Epist. xxx. xxxiv.

¹⁷³ Usser. de Stat. et Success. Eccl. p. 36, 37.

¹⁷⁴ Vid. Nimrod, ut supr. Vol. III. p. 443, 444.

¹⁷⁵ Thus, as the author of Nimrod observes, *Ibid.* p. 498., Alexander VI. was branded with the number of the beast, 6, 6, 6. For the honor of the Popedom, I shall restore the first couplet of the epigram, which its apologist suppresses :

viction has the Apostate Church betrayed, that she has been marked out in the prediction; that she has prohibited, by the solemn act of a council, all discussion on a subject, in which inquiry was likely to prove dangerous to her impious pretensions.¹⁷⁶

Vendit Alexander sacramenta, altaria, Christum;
 Emerat ille priùs, vendere jure potest.
Sextus Tarquinius, sextus Nero, sextus et ille,
 Semper sub sexto perdita Roma fuit.

¹⁷⁶ Lateran. Concil. Sess. XI. Decemb. 19, 1516.

A late writer has entered into a laborious defence of the Romish Church from the charge of idolatry, polytheism, and antichristian usurpation: see Nimrod, ut supr. Vol. III. p. 313, seq. By confounding the term Antichrist with Pseudochrist, and polytheism, as prohibited in the first commandment, with 'heterotheism,' as he terms it; he finds it very easy to refute the charge: since it is certain the Pope does not pretend to be Christ, nor worship a God, to the *exclusion* of Jehovah. The sophistry of this mode of defence is so shallow, as not to need exposure. It may be, however, expedient to offer a few words on the authorities by which it is supported. On the force of $\alpha\pi\lambda$ and $\psi\hat{\nu}\delta\sigma\varsigma$, in composition, I shall be pardoned for wasting no length of exposition. If 'the authentic text' of the Vulgate is consulted, it will be found, that $\nu\pi\lambda\gamma$, Exod. xx. 2. means 'coram me;' and therefore signifies, not as he interprets 'than,' 'or *without* me,' but 'before, or *with* me:' and is thus directed, not against the heterotheist, but the polytheist. If 2 Kings x. 29, 30, be consulted, it will be found, that the idolatry of Jehu is expressly denounced as sin, and that his commendation lay in the obedience of a specific command, which he was deputed to execute. And if Hos. iii. 1. 4. 5. viii. 4—8. 11. x. 1—3.

Such is the tyranny by which the Church of Christ has been oppressed from the year 736, for nearly eleven centuries. What may be the part assigned the Antichristian power, by whom this usurpation has been maintained, for the residue of the period of 1260 years, which we are assured its transgression shall not outlast, remains of course among the secrets of the Sovereign Disposer of all things. Whether the adulterous Church will continue to support the masquerade of pagan mummeries, or flinging aside the disguise, stand forth in the unblushing nakedness of professed infidelity, we can at present form but a vague conjecture. Of those who have indulged in such speculations, some are disposed to look forward to a time when resuming her expiring strength for a final and desperate effort, she shall rise up the persecuting power, by which the last fatal blow will be struck against the reformed religion. In this spirit of anticipation, it has been observed by Bishop Newton, with less prudence than he usually dis-

5—8. xiii. 2. 4. be examined, it will be perceived, how much countenance, in favour of 'idolatry,' is to be deduced from the promises of God, or the declaration of his Prophet. On the gratuitous assumptions, respecting the patriarchal religion and cherubim, in which the advocate's observations commence, it cannot be necessary to throw away an observation. But if Isai. v. 20. be consulted, he may probably learn from it, with what reward his labors will be recompensed, in entering into such discussions.

plays on such occasions, ‘ that before the end of ‘ the second woe, it should seem, that the Papists ‘ will make a great and successful effort against ‘ the Protestant religion.’¹⁷⁷ Much is to be apprehended, I am fully aware, from the unbaffled zeal, with which the Popish ministry ‘ compass sea and ‘ land,’ to gain a proselyte to their opinions. Much is to be feared from the slender scruples by which they are withheld, in sanctifying the means by the end, where so desirable an object is to be accomplished. The venerable antiquity to which their Church lays claim, the reverses to which it has been subjected, in an unequal contest with the terrorist and infidel, have excited a feeling of pity at her depressed state, which is easily improved into tenderness for her errors. The school of adversity in which her Clergy are trained, imposes a discipline for the reformation of their morals, which more prosperous circumstances have but relaxed and corrupted. The power which they arrogate to exclude those out of their pale from salvation, and the claims which they advance to miraculous operation in confirmation of their pretensions, have an imposing influence on the vulgar mind. Even the most cultivated and informed is not always proof against the voluntary mortifications and penances by which the votarists of this Church seek to establish a character for higher sanctity

¹⁷⁷ Newton ut supr. Vol. II. p. 414.

and self-denial. But to these causes a counter-acting force is opposed in the daily extension of ' liberal opinions : ' to the growth of which nothing has more largely contributed than that reaction which has been produced by the removal of the pressure which she imposed ; an unrestrained freedom of inquiry having suddenly followed its total restriction. The mad precipitancy which at present impels the nations, who are freeing themselves from her trammels, to shake off all legitimate authority, has produced a licentiousness of thinking and acting, which, in begetting religious indifference, will in some measure insure religious toleration. The convulsion, by which all settled order is daily broken up, in the countries which she has held so long in subjection to her tyranny and superstition, though it may not produce a more improved or permanent state of things, will atleast raise insuperable obstacles to the exercise of her persecuting spirit.

Extremes are indeed found to follow very closely after each other, and superstition and impiety have been consequently observed to alternate their influence over the opinions of nations, as well as of individuals : not less certainly than the sea is subject to its flux and reflux, or the seasons to their vicissitudes. With the intrinsic shallowness of the present age there is however a presumptuous confidence and pretence of information, which is

rather calculated to beget scepticism than to foster credulity. The tendency of the human intellect, 'in its march,' being thus in the direct road to infidelity; I am inclined rather to acquiesce in the opinion of another speculator upon these subjects, who looks to the opposite quarter of the heavens, from that to which most persons are disposed to turn, for the cloud which is to rise, overcharged and darkening with destruction. The fatal blow, by which he apprehends the great victory and triumph of irreligion will be achieved, and in which he fears the Church of Rome will be overwhelmed, will be struck by the sworn Antichristian associations, which are banded together under the semblance and title of masons.¹⁷⁸ As he more than insinuates that the ambitious schemes of the Popes have from an early period been advanced by these secret engines;¹⁷⁹ and as they are now in a great degree composed of apostates from the Romish communion; there is nothing inconsistent in this supposition and the prophetic intimations which have been given us of the persecuting power of the last days. And if we may venture to draw a conclusion from the signs of the times, which we are commanded to observe;¹⁸⁰ the conjecture appears to be not without foundation. A stimulus to the intolerant zeal of those sworn associations arises

¹⁷⁸ Nimrod ut supr. Vol. III. p. 405. 553. conf. 568, 569.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. p. 537, 538. ¹⁸⁰ Matt. xxiv. 32, 33.

from their hatred to Christianity, as a moral system by which their licentiousness is rebuked, and a barrier raised to the unrestrained gratification of their appetites and passions.¹⁸¹ The fury of this irreligious enmity will be probably inflamed against all professing Christians, by the outcry raised against priesthood and superstition, with a secret object of reveling in the spoliation of religious establishments. When we consider the precipitancy with which the declining superstition, that holds a tottering seat at Rome, transforms itself into this proselyting atheism, by which the exterior and semblance of Christianity are generally supplanted; we are justified in the apprehension, that if Religion is to fall the victim of Antichristian zeal, it is the withering and blighting spirit, which will arise from this pestilential source, that will paralyse its frame, and prey upon its vitals.

That it is to these sworn and secret societies, that we are to look, for the avenging power by which the adulterous Church will receive the recompence of her apostacy, the presentiment of her advocates seems to anticipate, and the course of retributive justice renders not absolutely improbable. If the wilful transgressions of parents are visited on their progeny, it is but consistent with the law of an equal retribution, that they should again recoil from the progeny upon the

¹⁸¹ Vid. Postel. ap. Nimrod ut supr. p. 551.

parent. The barter in which the prostitute Church has engaged for human souls, the measures which she has devised, in the licenced sale of indulgences, for debauching the public morals, have been productive of their natural effects upon her members, and have appeared in the lives of the ministry, who carried on the infamous traffic.¹⁸² Without descending to the lowest grades of the Clergy, of whose vices the canons enacted for the correction of their morals afford unquestionable evidence;¹⁸³ without appealing to the testimony of Erasmus, and others who describe the nunneries as nothing better than secret brothels; even in the highest rank of this Church we discover monsters, who have debased the human nature beneath the bestial, by the perpetration of every enormity. Among the very Popes, numbers are to be found who were

¹⁸² Confess. Trident. ut supr. ‘ Indulgentiarum etiam potestatem a Christo in Ecclesiā relictam fuisse, illarumque usum Christiano populo maximè salutarem esse, affirmo.’ Conf. Concil. Trident. Sess. IX. Dec. 4. Decret. de Indulgentiis. What floodgates this power, thus blasphemously derived from Christ, must have opened to iniquity, may be gathered from the Bull of Pope Paul III., who assembled the Council of Trent. The Jesuits, to whom it was granted, have termed it ‘ *mare magnum*; as it contained all privileges, as the sea all species of merchandise.’ Comp. Rev. xviii. 11—23.

¹⁸³ Vid. Concil. Trident. Sess. IX. Decret. super Reform. General. can. 14, 15. comp. *Il Putanismo di Roma*, ed Lond. 1670.

distinguished by nothing but their profligacy and rapacity; nay instances appear of some who, holding up Christianity to public derision, have openly boasted what a profitable fable it had proved to them, by the sale of indulgences.¹⁸⁴ In reading the accounts which are given by contemporaries and eye-witnesses of the debaucheries of which the papal palace was the shameless scene, we might fancy ourselves perusing a description of the orgies in which a Nero or Caligula presided.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ ‘Quantas divitias nobis peperit hæc Christi fabula,’ it is notorious, was the boast of Leo X. when, by the sale of indulgences, he roused the spirit of Luther, and brought about the Reformation.

¹⁸⁵ In the life of Cesar Borgia, by Tomasi, a letter is preserved, which was circulated in Rome during the pontificate of Alexander VI., and which describes the excesses and atrocities of which the court of that Pope was the shameless scene. One or two passages may be selected, as presenting a specimen of the state of morals at that time, in the precincts of the pontifical palace. ‘Itur ad palatium cum auro ad emenda fidei mysteria, ‘ stat ibi minister scelerum: venditor beneficiorum Cardinalis ‘ Mutensis ad explendam Pontificis avaritiam.... Omnia jam ‘ apud Pontificem esse venalia, dignitates, honores, matrimonii ‘ orum copulas, eorundem solutiones, divortia et repudia uxorum, ‘ et alia multa &c.... Nihil esse jam scelerum, aut flagitiorum ‘ quod non Romæ publicè et in Pontificis domo committatur.... ‘ Nam cædes, rapinas, stupra, et incestus referre innumeri et ‘ infiniti propè operis foret.... Longum est prosequi cæteros, ‘ qui vel interfecti, vel vulnerati, vel vivi in Tiberim dejecti, ‘ aut veneno consumpti sunt.... Quis horrenda libidinum monstra ‘ enarrare non formidet, quæ apertè jam in illius domo, et spretâ ‘ Dei atque hominum reverentiâ, committuntur? quot stupra,

After the recital of such enormities, we need not the confession of one who was a party to such excesses, that the participators in them are, in principle, infidels and atheists. As they are thus separated from the active ministers in 'the mystery 'of iniquity,' but by a nominal and accidental difference, if they are not secret members of the confederacy, they must be prepared to join in the Antichristian conspiracy. Should the current of prosperity set in a contrary direction, and poverty and persecution, instead of luxury and ease, be the lot of the professors of the Gospel; we need not doubt, that from those practical renegades, the ranks of infidelity will be readily recruited; and when the venerable fabric is marked for ruin, as they have long undermined the foundation of the structure, they will be among the foremost to dismantle its outworks.

A notion has immemorially prevailed among the Jews,¹⁸⁶ and has been generally received among

'quot incestus, quot filiorum et filiarum sordes, quot per Petri
 'Palatium meretricum, quot lenonum greges atque concursus,
 'prostibula et lapanaria, majori ubique verecundiâ contineri.
 'Kal. Novembr. solemnibus Omnia Sanctorum ceremoniis,
 'quinquaginta meretrices urbanæ ad convivium in Palatium
 'vocatæ, foedissimum et detestabilissimum spectaculum præ-
 'buere.' The remainder is too gross for transcription. Ved.
 Vita del Duca Valentino da T. Tomasi p. 331. ed. 1661.

¹⁸⁶ Vid. supr. p. 50. n. ¹⁰⁹. comp. Nimrod. ut supr. Vol. III.
 p. 307, 308.

Christians of the Reformed and even of the Romish communion,¹⁸⁷ that the opening of the reign of purity and peace will be preceded by the destruction of the idolatrous city, which will be effected by a subterraneous eruption and submersion. And this supposition is believed to be countenanced by 'the sure word of prophecy,' which declares, that 'her plagues shall come in one day, death, mourning, and famine; and she shall be *utterly burned with fire*: for strong is the Lord who judgeth her.' 'And they cried when they saw *the smoke of her burning*, saying, what city is like to this great city. . . . and her smoke rose up for ever and ever.' And it is believed, that the nature of the country of Italy, as subject to such convulsions, not less than the site of Rome, as surrounded by a sulphureous and bituminous soil, adds greater probability to the supposition. It is, however, perhaps indebted for its prevalence to an event attested by history, that, at the remarkable conjuncture of the subversion of the Jewish Temple, by which the final catastrophe of the world was supposed to be prefigured, a subterranean fire burst from the earth, and consumed a great part of the city.¹⁸⁸ When we reflect on the terrific character of such a visitation, as evincing at once the controlling power of God, and

¹⁸⁷ Burnet ut supr. Vol. II. p. 119. Newton ut supr. Vol. II. p. 365. Nimrod ut supr. Vol. III. p. 311.

¹⁸⁸ Dio. Hist. Rom. Lib. XXVI.

confirming the truth of the Prophets ; the inference which has been founded on it seems not improbable, that by some such mark of the divine interposition, the Jews may be brought to a knowledge of the truth, and a subjection to the authority of the Gospel. In such a conclusion we may acquiesce with less reluctance, since the prediction of the downfall of Rome by such a fiery visitation, as preserved by their traditional writers, will be more likely to excite their attention.

If we may now venture to form a judgment from the experience of the past, and the signs of the future, the epoch of the great period of 1260 years appears to have been accurately fixed in A.D. 736. And, consequently,¹⁸⁹ the opening of the Millennium is not destined in the ordinary course of providence, as revealed to us in scripture, to exceed the date, which has been determined from the prophecy of Elias, A. M. 6001, which corresponds with A. D. 1997. It must be surely regarded, as a most extraordinary confirmation of the accuracy with which that epoch has been fixed, that the commencement of the great apostacy, by which it has been determined, was particularly marked by the introduction of idolatry into the Christian Church.¹⁹⁰ For such is specifically the characteristic by which it is distinguished by the Prophets ; who deduce the period of 1260 years, which was

¹⁸⁹ Vid. supr. p. 29, 30.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 52. 54.

prescribed as the time of its duration, from ' the pollution of the sanctuary, by the abomination ' of idols.¹⁹¹ Nor can it be deemed less wonderful, that at that conjuncture precisely, the supremacy over the Empire as well as the Church was arrogated by the Pope,¹⁹² by which he appropriated to himself the character of Antichrist. Without insisting on the possibility of deducing the required time of the Millennium, through the previous period of 666 years, from the date of the destruction of the Temple ; or from the different dates of the sabbatical period of 7000 years, by which it might be computed ; it may be safely derived, from A. D. 736 taken as an epoch, by the period which is assigned as the bounds of the great apostacy. As that period is limited to 1260 years, when added to A. D. 736, it necessarily brings us down to A. D. 1996, as the required epoch of the Millennium.

That I may not, however, incur the censure which Photius has passed on Hippolytus,¹⁹³ and presumptuously obtrude ' where angels fear to ' tread ; ' it is necessary that I should enter, at some length, into explanation ; if not in defence, in quali-

¹⁹¹ Dan. xii. 7. comp. supr. p. 66, n. ¹⁴⁴.

¹⁹² Vid. supr. p. 55. et Bergom. Suppl. Chron. loc. cit.

¹⁹³ Phot. Biblioth. Cod. ccii. p. 526. Τῷτο γέγονότερας ἀν
εἰν τῷ προστήχοντος γνώμῃς· καὶ οὐ ἀπόφασις ἀνθρωπίνης ἀγνοίας, ἀλλ' ἐν
επιπνοίας τῆς ἀνωθεν διελέγχει.

fication of my conclusions. In entering on the task of exculpation, I must, however, acknowledge, that I have been never much discouraged by the texts,¹⁹⁴ which are supposed to repress enquiry into such subjects, as irreverent and presumptuous; as they seemed to be very imperfectly understood, with all the labor which has been employed in their explication. Notwithstanding the learned pains which they have exercised, I find them so indifferently reconciled with the divinity of our Lord, that they are left very little compatible with his prescience, or his veracity.¹⁹⁵

To clear up this difficulty, and obviate all grounds of offence, we must, I believe, have recourse to a distinction, which has been, with great justice, insisted on between the monarchical government of God, and the œcumical which he has committed to a Mediator.¹⁹⁶ They are very clearly distinguished in scripture. The one is accordingly described as under the absolute uncontrolled will of the Father;¹⁹⁷ while the other is committed, under him, to the superintendance of the Son.¹⁹⁸ The one is represented to be as absolute as it is

¹⁹⁴ Matt. xxiv. 36. Mark xiii. 32. Act. i. 7.

¹⁹⁵ Vid. Burnet de Stat. Mort. p. 144. sq. Newton ut supr. Vol. II. p. 54.

¹⁹⁶ Calvin. Instit. Lib. IV. cap. xi. Seld. de Synedr. Hebr. Lib. I. cap. x. p. 176.

¹⁹⁷ 1 Cor. xv. 27. John v. 20.

¹⁹⁸ Matt. xxviii. 18. Eph. i. 22. Heb. ii. 8. John iii. 35.

eternal ;¹⁹⁹ the other to be merely temporary, and in the fullness of time to be surrendered to the Father.²⁰⁰ The one is declared to be secret and inscrutable ;²⁰¹ the other is described, as revealed and promulgated through the Prophets.²⁰²

When the Great Sabbath, to which our expectations are turned, is considered with regard to the divine sovereignty and economy, as thus described in the scriptures ; it would appear, that in the dispensation in which it is promulgated, the time of its commencement was not absolutely determined, but the terms of its acceptance merely conditionally proposed. Not to insist, at present, on the strong declarations of our Lord, to the inquiries of his disciples ; in this light it seems clearly to have been regarded by St. Paul, in undertaking to prove that ' a sabbatism remained to the people of ' God.'²⁰³ He distinctly shews, that it had been proffered to the Israelites, on their entrance into the land of Canaan,²⁰⁴ and that they had forfeited the right to enjoy it, by rejecting the conditions, on which it was proposed to their acceptance. ' And to whom ' reasons the Apostle, ' sware he, ' that *they should not enter into his rest*, but to them

¹⁹⁹ Matt. xxiv. 36. Acts i. 7.

²⁰⁰ Matt. ibid. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 28.

²⁰¹ Deut. xxix. 29. Col. iii. 3.

²⁰² Deut. ibid. Rom. xvi. 25, 26.

²⁰³ Heb. iv. 9. ²⁰⁴ Heb. iii. 10—19.

‘*that believed not?*’ So we see, that they could not enter in *because of unbelief.*²⁰⁵ The remarkable time, at which the Israelites were delivered from the bondage of Egypt, and assigned a rest in that promised land,²⁰⁶ which was typical of the sabbath to be enjoyed in a better and heavenly country,²⁰⁷ was an earnest and pledge of the divine intentions, with respect to the chosen people, had they not been frustrated by their infidelity.

The same method, I shall hereafter have occasion to observe, was followed by the Prophets, in offering the terms of security and peace to the Jews, on their restoration to the promised land, from which their transgressions had occasioned their expulsion. And if the divine dispensation be estimated with reference to the nature of the beings for whose use it is intended, such a con-

²⁰⁵ Heb. iii. 18, 19.

²⁰⁶ Usser. ut supr. ad A. M. 2560. ‘*Annus septimus a Terrâ primùm ab Israelitis coli cæptâ, idemque primus sabbaticus in eâ ab illis actus: quum à Jesu typico in requiem fuissent adducti, quæ ‘sabbatismi populo Dei’ per verum Jesum acquirendi umbra erat et figura [Heb. iv. 8, 9]. Atque hinc annorum Jubilæorum, sive quinquagesimorum epocha est deducenda [Lev. xxv. 8—13].*’ J. Cappel indeed computes the time of rest from the division of the land under Joshua, which he places in A. M. 2555. Chron. Sacr. ut supr. p. 9. This period may be justly considered a great sabbatical year, as consisting precisely of 365 sabbatical periods of seven years each.

²⁰⁷ Heb. iv. 8, 9. xii. 16.

ditional mode of proposing those terms is particularly recommended by its fitness and wisdom. It is peculiarly adapted to the purpose of those who are placed in a probationary state, as calculated to secure the highest practical advantages. Had the recompense of their labors been distant and irrevocably fixed, they must have wanted encouragement in their toil, and consolation in sufferance and disappointed exertion. But when assured, that their lot was under the absolute control of an omnipotent and all-merciful Disposer; that he had set no other limits to his providence, but in the determination of a time, beyond which his long-suffering would not be protracted; whether they remained under the apprehension of punishment, or the expectation of reward, they would be equally stimulated by the prospect of a speedy retribution.

In strict consistency with this view of the divine dispensations, the probationer for a state of reward or punishment, receives perpetual warning to be prepared for the speedy coming of the Lord. In this view the disciples were instructed by their Heavenly Master to pray daily to the Father, ' thy ' kingdom come.'²⁰⁸ In this spirit the Prophet Daniel, with a perfect understanding of ' the number of years that the Lord would accomplish in the ' desolation of Jerusalem,' prayed that he would

²⁰⁸ Matt. vi. 10.

‘ not defer to shine upon the sanctuary.’²⁰⁹ In this spirit St. John, with as perfect a knowledge of the time during which ‘ power was given unto the beast ‘ to continue,’ utters the pious ejaculation, ‘ even ‘ so, come Lord Jesus.’²¹⁰ In this spirit, he represents the saints as praying under the altar, that the day of retribution might not be longer delayed.²¹¹ And in the same spirit, our Church has provided, when any member of her communion is committed to the earth, that a petition shall be offered up to God, that ‘ he would hasten his kingdom.’

When the preceding distinctions are kept fully in view, the answer of our Lord to the inquiries of his disciples respecting the time, in which the reign of righteousness and peace would commence, admits of a very satisfactory explanation. When the difference between the monarchical and ecumenical government is acknowledged; and it is kept in view, that the dispensation of the one was committed to the Son, while the sovereignty notwithstanding remained unresigned by the Father; the difficulty in which it is embarrassed admits of some solution. ‘ When they, therefore, were come ‘ together, they asked of him, saying, Lord wilt ‘ thou *at this time* restore again the kingdom of ‘ Israel.’²¹² If we consider the information which the disciples had previously received upon this

²⁰⁹ Dan. ix. 2. 17. 19. ²¹⁰ Rev. xiii. 5. xxii. 20.

²¹¹ Ibid. vi. 9. ²¹² Act. i. 6.

subject, to which there is indeed a plain allusion in our Lord's reply to this demand; it will shed no inconsiderable light on the difficulties of the answer. They had received intimation of an event, which, however overlooked by them, was yet to be fulfilled; 'And this Gospel of the kingdom' he had declared, 'shall be preached *in all the world* for 'a witness unto all nations; *and then shall the end come.*'²¹³ But forgetful of this declaration, they seem only to have remembered the consolatory assurance with which it had been attended, and on it they grounded their enquiry: for he had also assured them, 'And except *those days should be shortened*, there should no flesh be saved; but for 'the elect's sake *those days shall be shortened.*'²¹⁴

The question thus put by the disciples to our Lord seems to have been framed with some reference to the latter declaration; and it apparently goes to the extent of inquiring, whether the absolute authority of God would interpose, at that time, to abridge the period which had been assigned, as the bounds of the dispensation of which they were chosen to be ministers. With a just rebuke to their curiosity, in seeking to penetrate into the secret designs of God, he directs their attention to his revealed purposes, as formerly disclosed to them. 'And he said unto them, it is not for you 'to know the times or the seasons, which *the*

²¹³ Matt. xxiv. 14.

²¹⁴ Ibid. 22.

‘ *Father hath put in his own power.* But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.’²¹⁵ The full force of the reply turns upon the term ‘ power,’ which, in the original Greek, and still more emphatically in the Syriac, that was probably used on the occasion, signifies absolute uncontrolled dominion.²¹⁶ On the possible and extraordinary exercise of this prerogative of the Supreme God, all inquiry must have been mere speculation, and all speculation positively presumptuous and irreverent. It was accordingly silenced, as such, by our Lord, the object of whose dispensation was not to scrutinise the secret counsels, but to impart the revealed purposes of the Almighty.

²¹⁵ *Acts i. 7, 8.*

²¹⁶ The original has, οἱ ὁ Πατὴρ ἔδει τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐξουσίαν: the term ἐξουσία is interpreted, ‘ *auctoritas, potestas plena, licentia agendi et faciendi, dominium, imperium*:’ vid. Schleusn. et Biel Lexic. in voc. In the Syriac, however, the term is even stronger, سُلْطَنَى! حَدَّدَنَى! أَنْكَرَنَى!, ‘ which the Father hath put in his own *sovereign disposal*.’ From the word سُلْطَنَى of the Orientalists, we borrow the term *Sultany*, which is used to express an absolute monarchy, in which the disposal of every thing depends on the sole will of the monarch. In this sense it is used to express the most absolute dominion of God, Dan. iv. 34. נְטוּשָׁהָןְשָׁלְמָה as we should say, ‘ a Sultany of Sultanies.’ The Greek of the Septuagint is less forcible, Sirac. x. 4. εἰς χειρὶς Κυρίου ἡ ἐξουσία τῆς γῆς.

The case is nearly similar, which, on a prior occasion, drew from our Lord a correspondent and even stronger declaration, when pressed by the curiosity of his disciples. The destruction of the Temple, of which he had apprised them, afforded them an opportunity of interrogating him, on a subject in which it was natural their interest should be strongly excited. With some importunity to be informed of *the precise time*, when the reign of peace and righteousness, in which they would bear a distinguished part, should commence upon earth, they put a question to him, which contained a threefold proposition, ‘Tell us *when* ‘*shall these things be?* and what shall be the sign of ‘thy coming: and of the end of the world,’ or, as it should be rendered, ‘the end of the dispensation?’²¹⁷ The great fitness and wisdom, in the solution given to these interrogatories, appear to lie in the method of our Lord’s reply; which at once satisfied the inquisitiveness of his disciples, as far as it was reasonable, and repressed their curiosity, as far as it was vain and intrusive.

The nature of the dispensation which had been committed to Christ, and in which he had required the Apostles’ ministry, it had been the business of the Prophets to unfold.²¹⁸ To them he accordingly refers the disciples for information; and finds his answer to the questions proposed to him, on the

²¹⁷ Matt. xxiv. 3. ²¹⁸ Rom. xvi. 25, 26. conf. supr. p. 91.

prophecies of Daniel, by an inquiry into which they had been apparently suggested. His reply to two, out of three of the difficulties proposed for his solution, is accordingly founded on the revelations of that Prophet. As far as their inquiries related to 'the end of the dispensation,' he satisfies their curiosity, by reference to the predicted pollution of the Temple, in the ruins of which the ceremonial Law would be buried. 'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth let him understand;) then let them that be in Judæa, flee unto the mountains.'²¹⁹ As far as the question proposed to him related to 'the signs of his coming,' he resolves it by a like reference to the tribulations by which the same Prophet had declared, in nearly the same words, it would be preceded. 'For there shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be....Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened...and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven... And he shall send his angels, and they shall gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'²²⁰ But reserving the

²¹⁹ Matt. xxiv. 15, 16.

²²⁰ Ibid. 21. 29, 30, 31. Dan. xii. 1, 2. 'And there shall

leading proposition, ' when shall these things be ?' for his final consideration, he declines giving it an explicit answer. ' But of that day and hour ' knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but ' my Father only.'²²¹ There was a time revealed, which, as not positively but conditionally determined, depended on contingencies, of which the knowledge and control remained at the disposal of the almighty, independant Sovereign. To profess a knowledge of the result, would be in effect to make that absolute which was merely revealed as contingent. Such an undertaking, as involving a contradiction, and of consequence an impossibility, the Son might well declare was not in his province or power, without any derogation from his divinity.

If we thus discriminate between the monarchical government of God, and the œcumencial committed to the Son ; we may in some measure remove the offence which those difficult passages are calculated to raise, although we cannot solve every difficulty in which they are embarrassed. It would indeed appear, as the distinction is fully

' *be a time of trouble* such as there never was since there was a ' nation even to that time : and at that time thy people shall be ' delivered, every one that shall be found *written in the book*. ' And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall ' awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and ever- ' lasting contempt.'

²²¹ Matt. xxiv. 36.

acknowledged in scripture, that, on both of the beforementioned occasions, our Lord had merely declined transgressing the bounds of the Mediatorial province, from an indisposition to invade the Monarchical. In the one passage he defines the limits prescribed to his kingdom, as distinct from that which the Father retained in his absolute sovereignty and control ; to which (atleast at the time when he spoke,) he was not admitted, and from which the angels were wholly excluded. In the other, he asserts in the strongest terms the absolute dominion of the Father, into which the Apostles were disposed to pry, with a vain and presumptuous temerity. And in this conclusion we shall the more readily acquiesce, if we consider, that the course which our Lord was induced to take was, in a great measure, determined by the conduct of his disciples. Previously to the first expression of their curiosity, upon such inscrutable subjects, they had been instructed by him, in the scheme of revelation, as delivered by the Prophets.²²² And it is apparent, from the questions which they proposed for a solution, that their views on the subject were just and comprehensive. They embraced the entire system, as included between the close of the old dispensation, under Moses, and the establishment of the new, under the Messiah. The disciples must have consequently learned, from the perusal

²²² Luke xviii. 31. xxv. 27.

of Daniel, that an extensive and determinate period was, in the regular course of the divine economy, interjected between those events. And had they still entertained any doubts on the subject, they must have been removed in the exposition which they had received from our Lord; who had assigned those events a like prominence and importance, in his comment on that Prophet. But beyond these landmarks, which he had set up, as boundaries to his own predictions, their curiosity was unfortunately disposed to advance. From the revealed purposes of God, to which they had already attained, they sought to ascend to his secret counsels, which are 'deep and unsearchable.'²²³ Such presumptuous curiosity was as irreverent as it was vain; and our Lord accordingly repressed and rebuked it.

In the sentence which this temerity provoked, I can therefore discover no intimation, which should discourage our inquiries into the divine purposes, as far as they are shadowed or revealed in the prophetical scriptures. We have the authority of the Sovereign Disposer himself, that 'the secret things 'belong unto the Lord our God; but those things 'which are revealed belong unto us and to our 'children for ever.'²²⁴ We have not only the sanction of our Lord's example, but the authority of his word, in thus undertaking to 'search the

²²³ Job. xi. 7. Rom. xi. 33.

²²⁴ Deut. xxix. 29.

‘ scriptures.’²²⁵ On the occasion before us, the Divine Teacher not only referred to the text of Daniel, but added this recommendation to his hearers; ‘ he that readeth let him understand.’²²⁶ And in giving this injunction, he recommended no more than Daniel himself had undertaken; who, as he informs us, ‘ understood by books the number ‘ of the years whereof the word of the Lord came ‘ to Jeremiah the Prophet;’²²⁷ for by these ‘ books,’ there can be little doubt we must understand the Bible.²²⁸ The beloved Prophet was, it is true, dismissed with a command, to ‘ shut up the words, ‘ and seal the book,’²²⁹ but the injunction was given with this limitation, that ‘ the words were closed ‘ up and sealed but to the time of the end.’²³⁰ And for the encouragement of those who might live when time should clear away the obscurities in

²²⁵ John v. 39.

²²⁶ Matt. xxiv. 15. Thus, I think it is clear, those words must be understood, which have been absurdly supposed by some to be inserted in our Lord’s discourse by the Evangelist; and not less absurdly by others, to be interpolated by some scribe in the text of St. Matthew. On them depends, in a great measure, the vindication of our Lord’s prophetic reputation; who, unless he be understood with reference to Daniel’s period of 1260 years, very unaccountably passes, from the destruction of the Temple to his own advent at the end of the world. For the *typical* relation which is discovered between these events, will not justify the abruptness of the transition.

²²⁷ Dan. ix. 2. ²²⁸ Vid. Act. vii. 42. Rom. i. 2.

²²⁹ Dan. xii. 4. ²³⁰ Ibid. 9.

which an earlier and darker age was involved, the further assurance was accordingly added, that ' knowledge should be increased, and the wise ' should understand.'²³¹ We have besides received a particular assurance, that wisdom is evinced by the understanding, which can ' count the number ' of the beast.'²³² We have been also given a general injunction, to ' take heed unto prophecy, ' as a light that shineth in a dark place, until the ' day dawn, and the day-star rise in our hearts.'²³³ While our investigations are pursued with a dependence on the divine guidance, and submission to the inspired word, we may, under these assurances, prosecute inquiry. Nor need we apprehend, that by merely searching into the sense of what is written, we shall incur the charge of irreverence or presumption; with which their curiosity was deservedly rebuked who sought to penetrate into God's unsearchable counsels.

There are indeed limits set to our inquiry, as to our powers, which it is not permitted us to transgress, without presumption or danger. From the strong declarations of our Lord, to his disciples, we derive the assurance, that respecting the future, as placed under the absolute disposal of the divine inscrutable Mind, by no inquiry of ours can any thing positive be determined. And from hence we may discern the weakness and presumption of the

²³¹ Dan. xii. 4. 10.

²³² Rev. xiii. 18.

²³³ 2 Pet. i. 19.

attempt, to fix on any particular year, in which the Millennium will commence ; and the fruitlessness of the endeavour to be informed, whether, in our own times, it is likely to happen. The rest which God has prepared for his people was promised to the patriarchs, and offered to the Jews, as well on their delivery from the bondage of Egypt, as their restitution from the captivity of Babylon. It is proposed to ourselves, on the same conditions that it was offered to them ; and we are required to pray that it may come, and to prepare ourselves for its arrival. But while it is placed beyond human calculation to determine how soon it may arrive : we have received an intimation, that beyond a certain period, it will not be protracted. With this qualification, I should wish my declarations to be strictly understood, as relating exclusively to the œcumencial government, which was committed to Christ, and has been invaded by Antichrist. The epoch of this usurpation I conceive to be accurately fixed in A. D. 736 ; and as its continuance is limited to 1260 years, I have consequently concluded, that the opening of the Millennium may be dated from A. D. 1996. Let me not be then supposed to doubt, that it is in the power of Him, to whom ' all things are possible,'²³⁴ to consummate his designs, without any restriction to time or circumstance. As it is

²³⁴ Jerem. xxxii. 17. Matt. xix. 26.

my duty to pray, and to be prepared, for the arrival of those blissful times ; I am bound to believe, that the Almighty is as omnipotent to accomplish his secret purpose, whatever it may be, in the days of the present week, as in the great sabbatism of ages.

As far as respects the determination of the time of the Millennium, few difficulties remain, in which it can be thought to be embarrassed. An objection has indeed suggested itself to some, from the declaration of the very Evangelist, who has most circumstantially described the Great Sabbath. In speaking of an antichristian spirit which had arisen in his own times, he has been thought to antedate, by several years, the time of the great apostacy. ' Little children,' he declares, ' *it is the last time*, ' and as ye have heard that *Antichrist shall come*, ' even now are there many Antichrists ; wherefore ' we know, that *it is the last time.*'²³⁵ But by ' the ' last times,' it will not be disputed, we must understand the whole period of the Evangelical dispensation, as opposed to the Levitical ; extending, of course, from the destruction of the Temple to the second Resurrection.²³⁶ While the Apostle's declaration proves the existence of a defection in his own times, there is consequently nothing in his words which can restrict the period of the great apostacy to those times, rather than to the epoch

²³⁵ 1 John ii. 18.

²³⁶ Vid. ut supr. p. 35. n. 63.

from which it has been dated in the preceding investigation. In his declaration, it is plainly implied, that such a personage was expected, and that he would be distinguished by his ' denial of ' the Father and the Son :²³⁷ but it is far from insinuated, that the Antichrist, who was properly designated as such, was come, much less that he was manifested. No more is, indeed, conveyed in his words, than that an antichristian spirit, by which ' the last days ' would be distinguished, had already begun to be apparent. This, we have observed, was particularly the case, when the kingdom of Christ was oppressed by a succession of persecutors, to whom, as the adversaries of his sovereignty, the title was strictly applicable. But in the deplorable state to which Christianity was reduced under their domination, there is a practical refutation of the supposition, that the time of the Millennium should be referred to the primitive ages. Until, indeed, the triumph of righteousness and peace which should distinguish that favored time can be identified, with the profane and persecuting tyranny that oppressed and wore out the Church ; we need not seek further proofs, in subversion of any arguments that may be advanced, in support of so groundless a supposition.

In proceeding from the consideration of the time, to an inquiry into the nature of the Great Sabbath,

²³⁷ 1 John ii. 22.

a prospect widely different from the unsightly and disgusting picture, on which the mind has hitherto dwelt with fatigue, unfolds itself to our contemplation. The glorious images, in which the Evangelist's vision was arrayed, present as strong a contrast to the appalling scenes from which we have turned, as the Church exhibits under Christ and Antichrist, in the contrary states of triumph and persecution. Or to borrow an illustration from the figures in which it is shadowed by the Evangelist in either state; the opposition is as decidedly marked, as between the harlot, intoxicated and satiating her thirst for blood, from the cup of her abominations; and the bride, descending in veiled modesty from above, arrayed and ornamented for the bridegroom.²³⁸

Of the divine machines of the Apocalyptic vision, under which the destinies of the Christian Church are represented as carried into effect, 'the opening 'of the seventh seal' appears to be the most striking and important. It is not less distinguished by the comprehensiveness and significance of the subject,²³⁹ than the impressive solemnity of the images under which it is represented. It is shadowed under one of the most solemn offices, in the hereditary religion of the Evangelist; the service of which was calculated to impress the mind with the imposing grandeur of a splendid ceremonial.

²³⁸ Rev. xvii. 4. 6. xxi. 2. ²³⁹ Newt. ut supr. p. 214. 286.

Or it may be perhaps inferred, with greater probability, from the nature of the subject which presented itself to the Prophet, in his vision, that some solemn office of the real substantial and heavenly service, of which the fabric of the Temple, with its decorations and service, were but types and shadows,²⁴⁰ was visibly displayed to his enrapt imagination.

‘ And when he had opened the seventh seal,
 ‘ there was silence in heaven about the space of
 ‘ half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which
 ‘ stood before God ; and to them were given seven
 ‘ trumpets. And another Angel came and stood
 ‘ at the altar, having a golden censer ; and there
 ‘ was given unto him much incense, that he should
 ‘ offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the
 ‘ golden altar which was before the throne. And
 ‘ the smoke of the incense, which came with the
 ‘ prayers of the saints, ascended up before God
 ‘ out of the Angel’s hand. And the Angel took
 ‘ the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar,
 ‘ and cast it into the earth ; and there were voices,
 ‘ and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earth-
 ‘ quake. And the seven angels which had the
 ‘ seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.²⁴¹

The analogy between this description, and the service of the Temple, upon one of the most solemn festivals of the Mosaic ceremonial, is so obvious, that

²⁴⁰ Heb. viii. 5. x. 4.

²⁴¹ Rev. viii. 1—6.

it has often excited the attention of the antiquary and scholar.²⁴² And that the resemblance arises not merely from accident but intention, seems to be not less plain from the internal evidence of the Apocalypse itself, than from the nature of the Levitical service, externally regarded. The repeated allusions of the inspired author to the appearance of a structure in heaven, resembling the building which was consecrated to religious purposes in Jerusalem, add no small confirmation to the supposition. Among the objects which presented themselves in his vision on one occasion, he describes '*the Temple of God as opened in heaven* ; ' and that there was seen in his Temple the ark of ' his testament ; and there were lightnings, and ' voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, ' and great hail.'²⁴³ And on another occasion he observes, in like manner, ' And after that I looked, ' and behold *the Temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven* was opened, and the seven angels ' came out of the Temple.'²⁴⁴ In the part of the Evangelist's vision which is immediately under our view, the allusion to ' the altar,' from whence ' the incense ascended up before God,' sufficiently proves that the scene of the incident which it

²⁴² Braun Select. Sacr. Lib. II. cap. ii. § xiii. Newton ut supr. p. 214.

²⁴³ Rev. xi. 19.

²⁴⁴ Ibid. xv. 5, 6.

represents occurred within the precincts of the same celestial structure.

But there are circumstances in the description which seem to intimate, that we are to look much higher than *the offering of incense*, which formed a part of *the daily service*, for the correspondent observance to the solemn rite which was beheld by the Evangelist, in his vision of the glory of heaven. The same ceremony formed a part of the highest festivals of the Temple service, and was celebrated with peculiar solemnity upon *the great day of Atonement*.²⁴⁵ And from a variety of authorities, which have been collected from the Jewish commentators in illustration of that office, the most exact similarity may be established between the office which the Apostle beheld, and the service which was performed, on that great festival, by the high priest, in the holiest place of the Temple.

In the relative gradations of sanctity which the Jewish service ascribed to different places and times,²⁴⁶ we must however ascend to a still higher degree, for a closer object of comparison, to the celestial office of which the Evangelist was a witness. The solemn festival of the Atonement, as forming a constant part of the service of every year, in which it was celebrated in the seventh

²⁴⁵ Braun ut supr. § xxxv. lxvii. lxxxii.

²⁴⁶ Selden. ut supr. Lib. I. cap. vii. p. 101.

month,²⁴⁷ necessarily formed a part of the service of those years which were accounted peculiarly holy, and were kept with higher ceremonies and greater devotion. With reference to the first institution of the sabbath, and its final celebration in heaven, the festivals of the Levitical service were divided into septenaries, which, according to their scale and gradation were held in different degrees of sanctity.²⁴⁸ Besides their sabbaths of days, of weeks, and of months, on the last of which the great festival of the expiation occurred;²⁴⁹ they had their sabbaths of years, and a great sabbath of these septennial periods.²⁵⁰ This last festival, which was termed the Jubilee, commenced with the great day of Atonement, when the offering of incense was made with peculiar solemnity; and the year was ushered in with the sound of trumpets.²⁵¹ Now as each of these festivals, and more eminently the last, was considered a type of that great sabbatism to which we give the name of the Millennium;²⁵² the exact correspondence between these ceremonies of the earthly Temple, and of 'the 'Temple of God opened in heaven,' leaves us little room to doubt, that from the high festival of *the*

²⁴⁷ Lev. xxiii. 27. ²⁴⁸ Burnet ut supr. p. 210.

²⁴⁹ Ibid. 3. 15. 27. ²⁵⁰ Ibid. xxv. 3, 4. 8.

²⁵¹ Ibid. 9. ²⁵² Leusden ut supr. p. 7. n. 15.

Jubilee year, the vision of the seventh seal derives the truth and propriety of its descriptions.²⁵³

In the ceremonies by which the great day of Atonement was celebrated, we discover all the circumstances of the Evangelist's description so clearly identified, as to leave no room for doubt, as to the purport of the images in which he has clothed it. In the relation which it is given to the Jubilee, as a festival by which that great day was succeeded in a particular year, it has a different and further signification; which has arisen from the character of this festival, as more eminently sabbatical. To investigate its mystic import, in this

²⁵³ Although Braun appears to me to err, in explaining the offering of incense, Rev. viii. 3. by the rite as *daily* observed in the Temple; he has yet justly associated 'the opening of the 'seventh seal' with the fall of Antichrist, and triumph of the Church under the Messiah. Select. Sacr. § xi. 'Septimum autem hic dicitur aperiri sigillum. Quemadmodum non dubitamus, quin 'septem sigilla' significant *septem diversa fata Ecclesiæ Novi Testamenti*, ita nobis constare videtur, 'septimum sigillum' notare *ultimam periodum, sive septima fata...* 'Quam periodum *initium habere putamus circa integrum Antichristi lapsum, per Regnum Christi gloriosum, Ecclesiæque pacem usque ad consummationem sæculorum.*' Id. ibid. § xix. 'Beda, Anselmus aliique [per silentium semihorii] intelligunt pacem Ecclesiæ post imperfectum Antichristum, usque ad diem ultimi judicii, quod futurum erit spatio quadraginta quinque dierum: à quâ sententiâ, non admodum alienus est Hieronymus in Danielem, cap. ii.'

respect, must be deferred for a short time; the illustration of the Apostle's imagery, as determining the object of the revelation which he received, necessarily demands a prior consideration.

In the daily and ordinary service of the offering of incense, one of the priestly order, who was chosen for the office by lot entered the holy place, where the altar of incense stood, and scattered the frankincense upon it.²⁵⁴ But on the tenth of the seventh month, the High Priest alone entered into the Holy of Holies with a golden censer, and filled it with clouds of incense.²⁵⁵ Upon that day, which was the great day of Atonement, as chief of the sacred order, he received, from an inferior priest, a chafing-dish filled with live coals from the altar of sacrifice, and a vessel with frankincense, of which he cast a handful upon the burning censer.²⁵⁶ By some of the priestly order, who were distinguished by their age and experience, he was then conducted to the holy place, and bound by an oath, to the celebration of the rite, with due form and solemnity.²⁵⁷ The accompanying priests then departed and wept: the High Priest also parted from them, with a like expression of mourning; the festival which was set apart for the office,

²⁵⁴ Misn. Cod. Tamid. cap. v. § 8. Maimon. Hilchot. Tmid. Umussaph. cap. iv. § 8.

²⁵⁵ Lev. xvi. 2. 12, 13. conf. Cod. Joma cap. v. § 1.

²⁵⁶ Ibid. cap. iv. § 4. cap. v. § 1. ²⁵⁷ Ibid. cap. i.

having been dedicated to penitence and affliction.²⁵⁸ From the awe which attended the service of so high a day, and the denunciations of wrath against those who should discharge it unduly or irreverently; the time during which he remained within the veil, was passed by the congregation, who worshipped in the Temple and its precincts in solemn silence.²⁵⁹ In the course of the service the Chief Priest cast the live coals from the censer upon the earth: the performance of the oblation was then announced, by the sound of an instrument, of the distant reverberation of which many improbable stories are recounted.²⁶⁰ On a signal given, the priests, who stood round the altar for sacrifice prepared with trumpets, sounded their instruments, proclaiming that the oblation was ended.²⁶¹ During the ascent of the clouds of fragrance, prayers were offered up, not only by the congregation assembléd in the Temple and its courts, but through the entire holy land, and in whatever countries the Israelites were scattered.²⁶²

But from the ceremonies of this service, the imagery of the Evangelist's vision, at the opening

²⁵⁸ Lev. xvi. 31. Cod. Joma, *ibid.*

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.* cap. iv. fol. 44. Cod. Sevach. cap. ix. fol. 88.

²⁶⁰ Massechet. Tamid. cap. v. Maimon. *utsupr.* cap. vi. § 4. 5.

²⁶¹ Cod. Tamid. cap. vii. § 3. Maimon. *Kele Hamickd.* cap. iii. § 4.

²⁶² Braun, *ut supr.* xc. xciii.

of the seventh seal, derives no less illustration than it receives from the localites which give a circumstantial precision to his descriptions. In the Holy of Holies, into which the High Priest entered, was placed the ark of the covenant, with the mercy-seat, over which the cherubim bent with expanded wings. On regarding the Temple as God's habitation, this part of the sacred structure may be most properly considered his throne.²⁶³ As shadowed by those winged figures, which formed supporters to it on either side, it resembled, in its form, a seat of royalty. As peculiarly set apart for the Divine Presence, it was to be approached but by the High Priest, and even by him, only upon the highest festival, and with the most solemn rite;²⁶⁴ for God had declared, that he would 'appear ' in the cloud upon the mercy-seat,²⁶⁵ which rose from the censer upon the day of expiation.²⁶⁶ It was, of course, scarcely possible that the readers of the Apocalypse could fail to identify the circumstances of this service, as celebrated in the Temple, in the mystical office which was exhibited to the Evangelist, when he beheld, in his vision, ' the ' smoke of the incense ascend up before God.²⁶⁷ So little probable, indeed, is the contrary supposition, that, if they were converts from Judaism, they must have been predisposed to observe the

²⁶³ Braun ut supr. xcv. ²⁶⁴ Lev. xi, 2. 13, 14. Heb. ix. 7.

²⁶⁵ Lev. ibid. 2. ²⁶⁶ Ibid. 2. 14. ²⁶⁷ Rev. viii. 4.

similarity, from a notion which was prevalent among the traditionists. By the Rabbins it was maintained, that on the festival of the Atonement, while the service was performed upon earth, a solemn ceremony was observed before God in heaven.²⁶⁸ And it was believed that, in the celestial service, a song was chaunted by the angels, while the worshippers on earth passed the day, as devoted to penitence, in humiliation and affliction. To the converts from Paganism, the affinities between the typical service and the heavenly reality were even more clearly pointed out, in 'the Epistle to the Hebrews';²⁶⁹ the resemblance is there fully traced between 'the greater and more perfect tabernacle'²⁷⁰ and 'the worldly sanctuary,' which Moses was commanded to make, after the celestial patterns.²⁷¹

After establishing, by an induction thus circumstantial and particular, the resemblance between the service of the earthly Temple, and the rites of which the Evangelist was witness, in 'the Temple 'opened in heaven,' the affinity between them may be admitted, without entering into a formal comparison. Conformably to what the Evangelist beheld in the one, we have traced in the other the ceremony of casting the incense upon the altar; the solemn silence in which the service was per-

²⁶⁸ *Braun ut supr. § xxxv.* ²⁶⁹ *Heb. ix. 7. 19. 24.*

²⁷⁰ *Ibid. i. 10.* ²⁷¹ *Exod. xxv. 40. Heb. viii. 5. ix. 23.*

formed, the ascent of the fragrant cloud before the throne of the Divine Presence, the casting the live coals upon the earth; the loud and reverberated sound which followed the rite, and the subsequent clangor of the trumpets by the priests who were stationed about the altar.

In the typical significance of the Levitical ceremonial we thus obtain a key to the mystic sense of the heavenly service, which is described by the Apostle. The office of making the oblation of incense was, as we have before observed, the prerogative of the High Priest alone, and could be discharged by him only on the day of expiation. As the incense offered in the heavenly sanctuary, 'with the prayers of the saints,'²⁷² is represented by St. John, as efficacious in the propitiation of God; little doubt can be long entertained,²⁷³ that the Divine Minister, who officiated as a High Priest, who bore the censer and made the oblation, could be no other than the Angel of the Covenant,²⁷⁴ he who was 'a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.'²⁷⁵ This is indeed so obvious, that it is assumed as true, by the writer whose learned pains have materially contributed to the illustration of the subject.²⁷⁶ From the typical

²⁷² Rev. viii. 3. ²⁷³ Vid. Heb. x. 11. Eph. v. 2.

²⁷⁴ Rev. vii. 2. conf. infr. n. ²⁷⁶ et Cramer ut supr. P. II. cap. v. p. 34. sq. ²⁷⁵ Heb. v. 6.

²⁷⁶ Braun ut supr. § cvii. 'Vanè argutantur Ribera alii

nature of the Levitical ceremonial, and the explanation given by St. Paul, of the pontifical office of our Lord,²⁷⁷ we may, without any undue licence of exposition, extend the principle on which that office is explained by the one Apostle, to the description given of it by the other. They refer in common to the great day of Atonement; but describe different parts of the service which was performed on that solemn festival. As the one illustrates the sacerdotal function of our Lord, by the entrance of the typical High Priest on that day, into the Holy of Holies, with *the offering of blood*,²⁷⁸ the other explains it, by his entrance into the same place, and on the same day, with *the oblation of incense*.²⁷⁹ And the affinity between the earthly type and the celestial reality further

‘ Pontificiorum doctores, [‘ alium Angelum ’] esse Gabrielem
 ‘ aut Michaelem, si hos angelos creatos credant, uti solent...
 ‘ Manifestum est, istum ἄλλον ἀγγέλον esse Christum Summum
 ‘ Ecclesiæ Pontificem qui solus Deo obtulit sacrificium gratum,
 ‘ et suffitum suavissimum dignissimumque, ut ejus virtute in cœlo,
 ‘ tanquam in Sanctum Sanctorum, immò singulis diebus ubique
 ‘ locorum in Ecclesiâ preces nostras Deo gratas sistat atque pro
 ‘ nobis intercedat. Sed Christum, in verbo Dei non vocari tantum
 ‘ ‘ Angelum ’ sed et ‘ alium Angelum,’ patet. Apoc. vii. 2.’
 Some of the Popish expositors, with a true antichristian spirit, identify, in this description, the Pope: Braun. *ibid. ci.*

²⁷⁷ *Heb. vi. 5—10. vii. 11—28. ix. 11—28.*

²⁷⁸ *Ib. ix. 24—26. comp. Lev. xvi. 2. 14. 16. 18.*

²⁷⁹ *Rev. viii. 3, 4. comp. Lev. *ibid.* 2. 12, 13.*

extends to the character of the festival; as it is represented in both, as a day of affliction and mourning.²⁸⁰ As, however, the one Apostle had described 'the High Priest of our profession,' entering into 'the holiest place of all;' he was now beheld, in the vision of the other, in the same place, imparting the incense of his merits to 'the prayers of the saints.'²⁸¹ And from the propitiation which was thus effected, those consequences were the result of which the seven angels with the trumpets are represented as the ministers:—the last of whom proved the herald of peace and triumph to the Christian Church.

In the vision of 'the seventh seal,' I therefore conceive, we have revealed to us, by the Evangelist, the cause and the consummation of the Millennium. Having already transcribed the first part of the vision, I shall subjoin the last, as it describes the opening of the peculiar period, of which I have undertaken to investigate the nature.

'And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms

²⁸⁰ Rev. viii. 1. 13. Lev. xvi. 31.

²⁸¹ Rev. viii. 3. The original has *ἵνα δώσῃ ταῖς προσυγχαῖς τῷ αγίῳ*, the sense of which is, I think, more accurately expressed in the heading prefixed to the chapter, than in the text: 'Another 'angel putteth incense to the prayers of the saints on the golden 'altar.' From the savor and fragrance of this oblation they could alone derive their acceptance: Eph. v. 2.

' of this world are become the kingdoms of our
 ' Lord, and of his Christ ; and he shall reign for
 ' ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders,
 ' which sat before God on their seats, fell upon
 ' their faces and worshipped God, saying, we give
 ' thee thanks O Lord God Almighty, which art, and
 ' wast, and art to come ; because thou hast taken
 ' to thee thy great power and hast reigned. And
 ' the nations were angry and thy wrath is come,
 ' and the time of the dead that they should be
 ' judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto
 ' thy servants the Prophets, and to the Saints, and
 ' them that fear thy name, small and great. And
 ' the Temple of God was opened in heaven, and
 ' there was seen in his Temple the ark of his
 ' testament : and there were lightnings, and voices,
 ' and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great
 ' hail.²⁸²

As we have the best introduction to the subject
of the Millennium in ' the opening of the seventh

²⁸² Rev. xi. 15—19. Bishop Newton indeed contends, that
the last verse should be transferred to the following chapter,
from which it has been improperly disjointed : Dissert. XXV.
P. II. ut supr. p. 289. But I cannot join him in that opinion.
On the investiture of the saints in their priesthood, the Holy of
Holies, in which the ark of the covenant was placed, is, with
great apparent fitness, declared to be thrown open to their
inspection : vid. Rev. xx. 6. conf. Heb. ix. 3, 4. 7. What
connexion the passage may have with the following chapter is
beyond my power to discover.

‘ seal ;’ we have a direct key, as I have already intimated, to that part of the Evangelist’s vision, in the nature of the Jubilee, as described in the Levitical service. As soon as they are confronted, the affinities between them will directly appear to extend to every circumstance in which a resemblance could be expected. It has been already observed, that they are alike represented to commence with the great day of Atonement. An indissoluble link seems to bind them together in the rite of the sounding of trumpets, by which they were not less distinguished, and from which the Jewish festival received its appellation.²⁸³ This we have particularly observed to be the case in the vision. It opens with the declaration ; ‘ And ‘ I saw the seven angels which stood before God, ‘ and *to them were given seven trumpets* ;²⁸⁴ and after the oblation of incense, it proceeds, ‘ and the seven ‘ angels, which had the seven trumpets *prepared to* ‘ *sound*.²⁸⁵ But of the Levitical festival it is equally declared ; ‘ then shalt thou cause *the trumpet of the* ‘ *Jubilee to sound*, on the tenth day of the seventh ‘ month, in the day of Atonement *shall ye make the* ‘ *trumpet sound* throughout all your land.²⁸⁶ They are alike represented as a sabbath of rest ;²⁸⁷ and indeed, the Levitical festival has been regarded,

²⁸³ Leusd. ut supr. p. 289. ²⁸⁴ Rev. viii. 2.

²⁸⁵ Ibid. 6. ²⁸⁶ Lev. xxv. 9.

²⁸⁷ Heb. iv. 9, 10. Lev. ibid. 8.

by the most competent authorities, as merely a type of the Great Sabbath,²⁸⁸ which we understand by the Millennium. Such are the terms likewise in which it is described, as enjoined by Moses : ‘ And thou shalt number *seven sabbaths of years* unto thee, *seven times seven years* ; and the space of *the seven sabbaths of years* shall be unto thee forty and nine years.’²⁸⁹ The other festivals of the Law were merely sabbaths of days, weeks, months, or years ; but the Jubilee was, in the spirit of the Jewish ceremonial, more eminently sabbatical, it was a sabbatism of sabbatisms. And in the vision of the seventh seal, as involving that of the seven trumpets, there is a like implication of septenary within septenary. But still more close and remarkable is, in the last place, the resemblance between the circumstances of the Apocalyptic vision and of the Levitical festival, in their object and nature. In the Jubilee we recognise more than those characters of rest and righteousness which were common to every sabbath. It was a sabbatism in the most exalted sense of the term ; a Great Restitution, in which liberty was proclaimed to the captive, deliverance to the oppressed : to the deprived, a reinstatement in their forfeited possessions. ‘ Ye shall *hallow the fiftieth year*,’ was the divine command, ‘ and *proclaim liberty* throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof : it

²⁸⁸ Leusd. ut supr. p. 200.

²⁸⁹ Lev. xxv. 8.

' shall be a Jubilee unto you ; and ye shall return
 ' every man to his possession. . . . and to his family.
 ' A Jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you, ye
 ' shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of
 ' itself in it. . . . For it is the Jubilee, *it shall be holy*
 ' unto you : ye shall eat the increase thereof out
 ' of the field. . . . Ye shall not therefore *oppress one*
 ' *another* ; but thou shalt *fear thy God* ; for I am
 ' the Lord thy God. ²⁹⁰

On thus tracing the parallel between the period of ' the seventh seal ' and of the Jubilee, the whole time during which the seven angels sounded their trumpets, is comprised *between the two great days of Atonement*. At a time, corresponding to the first of these festivals on the opening of the first sabbatical year, the first angel sounded ; after the oblation of incense, by the Angel officiating as High Priest.²⁹¹ Through a period, corresponding to five sabbatisms of seven years each, or the thirty-five years which succeeded, the five following angels sounded their trumpets. At the opening of the seventh sabbatical year, *with the day of Atonement*, the seventh angel sounded, and the year of Jubilee was proclaimed ; when ' the Temple of God was opened, and there was seen in his Temple, the ark of his testament.' ²⁹² And thus we perceive, as plainly as it can be conveyed in

²⁹⁰ Lev. xxv. 10, 11, 12, 17.

²⁹¹ Rev. viii. 3. 7..

²⁹² Ibid. xi. 19.

typical language, that 'the peace and righteousness,' which constitute the kingdom of God,²⁹³ and which await the Church in its Great Sabbath, are to be deduced from that *propitiatory rite*, from which alone we acquire righteousness and peace, with life and immortality.²⁹⁴ From this consideration, the accuracy of our views derives no slight confirmation. As God has determined, that from that divine source his mercy and benignity shall flow in the present state; from the same pure and inexhaustible fount his grace and goodness will issue, in that exalted state, where 'every good and perfect gift' will excel, not less in its degree, than in its duration.

The preceding exposition, it may be however necessary to observe, is to be understood as properly illustrative of the *imagery*, in which the Apostle's vision is depicted. We cannot suppose that the glorious scenes which it comprises literally occurred in the manner in which they are described; any more than we can imagine they happened in the time at which they were beheld in the vision. We are not to presume, that 'our 'merciful High Priest,'²⁹⁵ who ever 'maketh intercession for us,'²⁹⁶ at a particular moment of time, entered 'the holiest place of all,' with the censer

²⁹³ Rom. xiv. 17.

²⁹⁴ Eph. ii. 13. 15. 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Tim. i. 10.

²⁹⁵ Heb. ii. 17. ²⁹⁶ Rom. viii. 34.

of incense. Nor are we to suppose, that at equidistant times, corresponding with the division of the jubilee cycle by sabbatical years, the sounding of the seven trumpets occurred ; any more than we can reasonably suppose, that proclamation was made by such instruments, or that they are played on by angels. We must not, in fact, consider the objects of the prophetic vision, as competent to be circumscribed by time and locality. When the Evangelist marks the course of mundane events, to which such limits are prescribed, the times of each change, if necessary to be disclosed, are revealed with precision. But when the scene is shifted from earth to heaven, the subject has necessarily no circumscription but that of infinity and eternity. From the solemn and impressive ceremony, which supplies the images of the vision, we easily deduce the reality and cause of the great change which it depicts, as effected in the divine economy. But however illimitable and unappreciable, by our gross sense, the acts of infinite and spiritual agents ; as displayed in the dispensation of which human beings are instruments, they are necessarily confined to time, and bounded by circumstance. Thus far they may be comprehended and described. By whatever inscrutable agency the great consummation may be effected, we are therefore atleast competent to understand, that at a particular time, the prayers of the saints,

through the incense of Christ's merits, will take effect: and that glorious rest, which God prefigured in the Sabbath at the Creation, and shadowed in the Jubilee under the Law, will be realised, and enjoyed by his people.

From the gradual revelation of the destinies of the Church, in the events which followed 'the 'opening of the seventh seal,' some of the greatest difficulties in which the doctrine of the Millennium has been involved, by inquirers into the subject, receive an easy solution. Light may, indeed, be directly deduced from it, whereby a juster view may be obtained, as well of the nature of that Great Sabbath, as of the circumstances which we are led to believe will attend its opening. On both these points, however, very peculiar notions have been unfortunately advanced by a writer of deserved celebrity, as the founder of the science of geology; by whom the doctrine of the Millennium was rescued from the neglect in which it had long lain, after inquiry into it had been studiously repressed by the Romish theologians. As the great genius and learning displayed in 'the Theory 'of the Earth' have not only stamped a high authority on the work, but have made some distinguished proselytes²⁹⁷ to the author's opinions, among whom we number Bishop Newton; his system, more especially as it is noticed with

²⁹⁷ Whiston New Theor. p. 280. 446. Newt. ut supr. p. 416.

approbation in ‘the Dissertations on the Prophecies,’ deserves a particular examination.

The opinions of Dr. Burnet on the subject of the Millennium are delivered in the two following propositions, which the author lays down with the formality of theses.²⁹⁸

‘That there is a happy millennial-state or a future Kingdom of Christ and his saints, prophesied of and promised in the Old and New Testament; and received by the Primitive Church, as a christian and catholic doctrine.’

‘That this blessed millennial state, according as it is described in Scripture, *cannot take place in the present earth*, nor under the present constitution of nature and providence; but *is to take place in the New Heavens and New Earth, after the Conflagration.*’

One great object, to which the learned author has devoted a considerable part of his work, is accordingly to prove, from the testimony of antiquity, that the frame of the present earth will be dissolved by fire; and to account, on physical principles, for the mode of its dissolution.²⁹⁹ The doctrine of the destruction and renovation of the earth is founded by him upon express authority of Scripture, of which, besides the usual texts on which it is generally supported,³⁰⁰ he deduces a

²⁹⁸ Burnet ut supr. p. 287. ²⁹⁹ Id. ibid. B. III. p. 4. sq.

³⁰⁰ Is. lxv. 17. 2 Pet. iii. 7. 10. 12. Matt. xxiv. 35. xix. 28. Rev. xxi. 1.

great variety from the prophetical writers.³⁰¹ Its connexion with the doctrine of the Millennium, however, strictly speaking, depends upon a single passage of the Apocalypse,³⁰² in which the Evangelist has given a particular description of the inauguration of the saints and martyrs, in the inheritance with which their earthly trials will be recompensed in that state of beatitude and glory.

‘ And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them,
 ‘ and judgment was given unto them ; and I saw
 ‘ *the souls* of them that were beheaded for the
 ‘ witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and
 ‘ which had not worshipped the beast, neither
 ‘ his image, neither had received his mark upon
 ‘ their foreheads, or in their hands, and *they lived*
 ‘ *and reigned with Christ a thousand years.* But the
 ‘ rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand
 ‘ years were finished. *This is the first resurrection.*
 ‘ Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first
 ‘ resurrection : on such *the second death* hath no
 ‘ power, but they shall be priests of God and of
 ‘ Christ, and *shall reign with him a thousand years.*³⁰³

The resurrection here designated, as the first, being understood, as a translation literally of *the body* from a state of death to life ; the consequence seems unavoidable, as ‘ a reign of the saints ’ is

³⁰¹ Burnet ut supr. B. IV. ch. iv. v. p. 213. sq.

³⁰² Id. ibid. p. 214. Id. de Stat. Mort. p. 213.

³⁰³ Rev. xx. 4, 5, 6.

mentioned, that they could not be restored to this world, in its present fallen, unregenerated state. The restitution of these holy persons, with glorified bodies, to this earth, in its present state of natural evil, (its moral degradation being excepted from the supposition,) involves an inconsistency, which cannot long be entertained in reason. A more suitable place of abode must be accordingly found for their earthly sojourn. And this is easily supplied from the Evangelist's description: at the close of the same chapter, he speaks of 'a second death';³⁰⁴ and at the commencement of the next, mentions the destruction of this earth, and the reproduction of 'new heavens and a new earth.'³⁰⁵ To this world, purified by fire from its former dregs, and renewed in natural and moral beauty, the theorist accordingly supposes the holy persons will be restored, who are delivered from the bondage of death by 'the first resurrection.'

It may be confessed that there is, apparently, but the one way of evading the force of this conclusion, which lies in the acceptance of the term used by the Apostle, with some latitude of meaning. The objection to such a licence, as unwarrantable, has been accordingly stated by the learned author; but with a view to its refutation. Besides urging, in subversion of it, the general objection, arising from the danger of carrying the allegorising spirit

³⁰⁴ Rev. xx. 14.

³⁰⁵ Ib. xxi. 1.

to too great an extent, in the interpretation of scripture ; he has advanced two reasons, which seemed to him to enforce the necessity of restricting the term to its literal meaning. Admitting the notion of a figurative resurrection, in which the soul is supposed to be raised from spiritual death to life ; he argues against the possibility of applying this supposition to the case of the good or the wicked, who are assigned a place in both resurrections.³⁰⁶ For, it cannot be conceived of ' the ' martyrs and saints,' that they are raised from a death in trespasses and sins ; and as little can it be conceived, of the reprobate and depraved, that they are raised to a state of regeneration and righteousness. To these arguments he subjoins a caution (which comes, by the way, with rather an awkward grace from a professed allegorist), on the danger of reducing the first resurrection to a figure, as the second may be involved in its fate, and ' reduced to an allegory also.'³⁰⁷

But little advantage is derived from this defence, by the author, unless it can be shewn, that the authority of the Evangelist supports his main position, with the consequences, which it draws in its train.³⁰⁸ If on the other hand, it can be shewn, that the theorist's notion of a first resurrection, *to an inheritance in the new earth*, derives no countenance

³⁰⁶ Burnet ut supr. p. 216.

³⁰⁷ Id. ibid. p. 218.

³⁰⁸ See Theory ibid. p. 271.

from the Apostle, but is on the contrary opposed to his description of both resurrections; the ground on which he builds must give way, and with it, the superstructure must fall which is raised on so hollow a foundation.

On the most transient inspection of the Evangelist's text, it must appear, that so far is he from coupling the destruction and renovation of the earth, with the time of 'the first resurrection,' that he connects that great catastrophe of nature with the second. And whatever be the sense in which the term is to be understood, between both resurrections he interposes the distance precisely of the millenary period.³⁰⁹ With such circumstantial precision has the inspired author detailed the two events, in which this great sabbatism commences and ends; that his description will not bear the sense which the theorist forces upon it: without straining it to a degree, which will be scarcely admitted, by the advocates of a literal interpretation. In describing its commencement, he writes; ' and I saw the souls of them that were ' beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the ' word of God... and they lived and reigned with ' Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the ' dead lived not again until the thousand years were ' finished. This is *the first resurrection.*'³¹⁰ In des-

³⁰⁹ Comp. Rev. xx. 4, 5. with ibid. 11, 12. xxi. 1.

³¹⁰ Ibid. xx. 4, 5.

cribing its close, he writes ; ‘ And I saw *the dead* ‘ small and great stand before God, and the books ‘ were opened. . . . and *the dead* were judged out of ‘ those things which were written in those books, ‘ according to their works. And the sea gave up ‘ *the dead* which were in it ; and death and hell ‘ delivered up *the dead* which were in them, and ‘ they were judged. . . . And death and hell were ‘ cast into the lake of fire. This is *the second* ‘ *death*.³¹¹ In the first of these extracts, which is unfortunately that on which the theorist rests his cause, there is no circumstance which indicates a resurrection of ‘ *the dead* ; in the second it is clearly and explicitly asserted. But even beyond this, there is *an opposition* between the terms in which both resurrections are described, which seems to dispose of the question, how far the first is to be considered figurative or literal. In the one the Evangelist declares ; ‘ I saw *the souls* of them that ‘ were beheaded for the witness of Jesus.³¹² In the other he declares ; ‘ I saw *the dead* small and ‘ great stand before God.³¹³ In the former passage, that part of our nature which is spiritual and immortal is as expressly mentioned, as in the latter, that part which is corporal and obnoxious to mortality. And the distinction which is marked by a contrast thus forcible, is confirmed by the

³¹¹ Comp. Rev. **xx.** 12, 13, 14.

³¹² Ibid. 4.

³¹³ Ibid. 12.

Apostle's description of the same persons, previously to the first resurrection. ' And when he ' had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar, ' *the souls* of them that were slain for the word of ' God, and the testimony which they held... And ' it was said unto them, that *they should rest* yet ' for a little season, until their fellow servants and ' their brethren that should be killed as they were, ' should be fulfilled.'³¹⁴ Here there can be obviously no allusion to those beings, as delivered from the grave, but merely in the spiritual state in which they existed previously to the first and second resurrection.

It cannot, therefore, admit much longer of doubt, that in using the phrase, ' a first resurrection,' the Evangelist merely speaks, as he literally declares, with reference to '*the souls* of them that were ' beheaded,' as separated from their bodies, in which, '*the dead*, both small and great, shall stand ' before God.' And consequently, that his testimony supplies the theorist, with as little authority for the mortal forms, in which he invests the inhabitants of his new world, as for the earth, in which he assigns them an abode, after their imaginary resurrection *in the body*. And, consequently, as there is no reference in the Apostle's text to such a resurrection, as the author of ' the Theory ' assumes, that the objection founded by him, on

³¹⁴ *Ibid.* vi. 9. 11. *conf. Wolf. Cur. in Rev.* vi. 9. p. 496.

the figurative resurrection of the martyrs and reprobate, is a mere illusion, which is raised by his shadowy wand, for the purpose of exhibiting his art in laying a phantom.

While we fully acquiesce in the first position of the theorist, ' that there is a happy millennial state, ' or future Kingdom of Christ and his saints, prophecied of, and promised, in the Old and New Testament; ' we must wholly deny our assent to the succeeding; ' that this blessed state cannot take place in the present earth, nor under the present constitution of nature and providence, but is to take place in the New Heavens and New Earth, after the Conflagration.'³¹⁵ Nor need we take a wider range of argument, in refutation of this imaginary position. The bare mention of one or two consequences, which it involves, will preclude the necessity of entering into a specific examination of the grounds on which it is rested. It induces the necessity of admitting, not only two resurrections,³¹⁶ but two races of mankind,³¹⁷ two destructions of the earth,³¹⁸ and two advents of our Lord to judgment.³¹⁹ It must be therefore superfluous to descend to particular objections, or point out, how effectual a refutation is occasionally given to one argument, advanced in support of

³¹⁵ Vid. *supr.* p. 127.

³¹⁶ Burnet Theory, *ut supr.* p. 309. ³¹⁷ *Id. ibid.* p. 313.

³¹⁸ *Id. ibid.* p. 298. ³¹⁹ *Id. ibid.* p. 281.

• this theory, by the concessions which are made in another.³²⁰ It must be equally nugatory, to enter into any length of proof, that he virtually concedes what the advocates for a more sober view of the doctrine require, while he admits, ‘ that though ‘ the blessed Millennium will not be in this earth, ‘ yet the state of the Church here will grow much ‘ better than it is at present. There will be a ‘ better idea of Christianity, and, according to the ‘ prophecies, a full ‘ resurrection of the Witnesses,’ ‘ and an ascension into power, and ‘ the tenth part ‘ of the city will fall ;’ which things imply ease ‘ from persecution, the conversion of some part of ‘ the christian world to the reformed faith, and a ‘ considerable diminution of the power of Anti- ‘ christ.’³²¹ Of the main argument, which he pro-
poses in the form of a question, and which indeed forms his sheet-anchor, I have already shewn the security. ‘ In the first place,’ he observes, ‘ we ‘ suppose it out of dispute, that there will be new ‘ heavens and a new earth. This was our first pro-
position, and we depend upon it, as sufficiently ‘ proved both from scripture and antiquity.’ Thus far, indeed, we are agreed. But he proceeds ; ‘ This being admitted : How will you stock this ‘ new earth ? what use will you put it to ? . . . If

³²⁰ Comp. Burnet Theory, *ut supr.* p. 311 with p. 274, and p. 274 with p. 270.

³²¹ *Id. ibid.* p. 270. *Id. de Stat. Mort.* p. 242.

' you will not make it the seat and habitation of
 ' the just in the blessed Millennium, what will
 ' you make it.'³²² That ' the first resurrection ' is
 little calculated to supply the earth, of which he
 has described the destinies, with inhabitants,
 having the forms and functions which his theory
 requires, has been, I trust, already shewn, if the
 scope and language of the Evangelist have not
 been altogether mistaken. And thus alas ! like
 the phantasms raised by Prospero's wand, the
 sublime creations of this enchanter's art have dis-
 persed ' in thin air ; '

— ' The great globe itself,
 Yea, all which it inherit, have dissolved,
 And, like the unsubstantial pageant, faded,
 Leave not a rack behind.'

The vision of ' the seventh seal,' I have already
 intimated, affords a chart, which marks out our
 course, in steering through the intricacies of this
 difficult subject. From the sound of ' the first
 ' trumpet,' it reveals the fortunes of the Church,
 to the beginning and close of the Millennium ; the
 opening of which was proclaimed by ' the seventh.'
 This is not only evident in the description of the
 Evangelist,³²³ but clearly appears from his express
 declaration. ' But in the days of the voice of *the*
 ' *seventh angel*, when he shall begin to sound, *the*

³²² Burnet Theory, p. 271.

³²³ Vid. supr. p. 119, 120.

‘ *mystery of God should be finished*, as he hath declared to his servants the Prophets.’³²⁴ The point is indeed so palpable, that it is conceded by the theorist, who, in illustrating that part of the Apocalyptic vision, has observed; ‘ the seventh trumpet, which plainly reaches to the end of the world, and the resurrection of the dead, opens the scene of the Millennium.’³²⁵

As such are the only assignable limits of this portion of the Evangelist’s vision, the question which has been raised, respecting the destruction and renovation of the earth, previously to the opening of the Great Sabbath, (may be now laid effectually at rest, on his authority. By the sounding of the six angels, the destinies of the Christian Church until that time are revealed in succession. Nor can it be denied, that of all the chances or calamities to which the world could be subjected, the greatest beyond all comparison, whether we consider its natural or moral consequences, is that of the general conflagration. In it, as the theorist has forcibly proved, not only the proud works of nature, and boasted monuments of art, the living productions of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, but the frame of the solid earth, and the countless multitude, buoyant with life and health, who animate it, will be reduced, by an irresistible, devastating fire, to a hideous and

³²⁴ Rev. x. 7.

³²⁵ Burnet ut supr. p. 219.

smoking ruin. That to such a catastrophe it should be exposed, and, while its destinies were recounted by an angel, that, in the last expiring throes of desolated nature, it should perish, not merely without pity, but without remark, will not, I should hope, be even imagined.

The difficulties of the subject are thus narrowed to the consideration of 'the first resurrection,' which is represented among the primary effects, with which the proclamation, that the reign of 'righteousness and peace' had commenced upon earth, would be attended.

A speedy mode of disposing of this difficulty has been, however, discovered, in the supposition, that this resurrection is purely allegorical, and means nothing more than that *the Church* should, at a certain time, *rise* from a persecuted state to a state of prosperity. But this opinion, which is generally advanced by those who consider the time of the Millennium as already past, will require but a brief consideration. Its doom has been, indeed, long sealed by the author of 'the Theory.'³²⁶ He has clearly shewn, that it is not to be reconciled with the description of the Apostle, in confining the subjects of the first resurrection, to 'them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God;'³²⁷ and that it is as irreconcilably opposed to the testimony of history, which bears

³²⁶ Burnet ut supr. p. 217, 218.

³²⁷ Rev. xx. 4.

no evidence of the existence of such a state of the Church. His refutation of so groundless a hypothesis is only exceptionable, in the latitude of its concessions to the objectors to the doctrine of the Millennium. If the period of ' peace ' which it enjoyed be computed for the whole time of its triumph in Constantine's reign, so far was it from extending to ' a thousand years,' that it did not exceed seventeen. The persecution of Licinius occurred in the year 320,³²⁸ and Constantine died an Arian in 337.³²⁹ And unhappily, even in that short period, in the year 326, there was a sanguinary persecution of the Persian Christians, under Sapore, in which 18,000 are said to have been martyred.³³⁰ But if the duration of the kingdom of Christ be estimated by the triumph of ' righteousness,' it scarcely lasted ten years from the Session of the Council of Nice. In 327 Arius regained his favor at court, in 328 he was recalled, and in 335 the persecution of the Arians raged against Athanasius, who was driven into banishment in 336; the year before Constantine died.³³¹

³²⁸ Dodwell Chron. Pers. ad ann. 320.

³²⁹ Patr. Bened. Vit. S. Athan. ut infr. n.³³¹.

³³⁰ Cedren. Compend. ad ann. conf. Socrat. Hist. Eccl. Lib. VII. cap. xx. p. 367.

³³¹ Vit. S. Athan. à Patr. Benedict. Adorn. ad ann. 328. § 1. ann. 335. § 3. 16. 24. 27. ann. 336. § 1. ann. 337. § 1. conf. ad ann. 325. § 13. ann. 355. § 9.

From the death of this monarch, Jerome, who lived to deplore the descent of the northern barbarians, declares, that ' to his own times nothing prevailed but the rapine of the churches, and discord through the habitable world.'³³² In order to prove the possibility of identifying the millennial reign in this period, or in the preceding seventeen years, it will be now only necessary to cite the words of scripture, in which the opening of the eternal sabbath is announced. ' And there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and *he shall reign for ever and ever.*'³³³

There is, however, another view, in which ' the first resurrection ' is regarded, which, as professing a closer adherence to the Evangelist's text, merits specific attention. By some expositors, who strike into a middle course, it is consequently supposed, ' that the martyrs only will rise *from the dead*, and will be immediately translated into heaven, and there pass their Millennium in celestial glory; while the Church is still here below in her Millennium.'³³⁴ Although in this view of the diffi-

³³² Hieron. Suppl. Chron. Euseb. p. 182. ' Constantinus extremo vitæ suæ tempore, ab Eusebio Nicomediensi episcopo baptizatus, in Arianum dogma declinat; à quo usque in *præsens* tempus ecclesiæ rapinæ et totius orbis est secuta discordia.'

³³³ Rev. xi. 15. conf. supr. p. 119, 120. 128.

³³⁴ Burnet ut supr. p. 267.

culty, a nearer approach is made to the truth, it is not less exposed to the objection which has been urged against the theorist's system, arising from the distinction in the Evangelist's text, between the state of 'the soul' and of 'the body.' In insisting upon 'a resurrection *from the dead*,' it superinduces a consideration upon his text, which it does not acknowledge; as making exclusive mention of 'a resurrection,' and with reference merely to 'the soul.'³³⁵ And were the exposition unassailable by such an objection, it would be exposed to a further difficulty; that it is not to be reconciled with the scripture account of the second advent of our Lord, and the resurrection 'from 'the dead,' which are represented as single and general.

Had we, indeed, ground to suppose, that the yawning graves would resign their shrouded tenants, and that the saints, rising from the dust in their glorified 'bodies, would in our presence ascend above the clouds; the spectacle might be conceived to form no inappropriate introduction to the reign of righteousness and peace, upon earth. A miracle, so unbounded in its magnitude and extent, must be productive of that awful impression upon the observers, which ages could not obliterate. A perseverance in sin, in opposition to such evidence of the divine interposition, and a final retrи-

³³⁵ Vid. supr. p. 128.

bution, would be rendered impossible ; and by a philosophical necessity, a total reformation must be produced in the opinions and conduct of mankind. But by such an extraordinary intervention, a total derangement would be occasioned, not merely in the ordinary, but an incongruity introduced into the extraordinary providence of God. Such an extraordinary interposition, as exceeding the resurrection of our Lord in the extent of its effects, would transcend in magnitude the miracle, which preceded the sound of the Gospel, as dispersed to the ends of the world. The race that should survive so great and visible a display of the power and providence of God would be not merely placed in different circumstances from their predecessors, but in a state, wherein, as impelled by necessary causes, not actuated by moral inducements, they would cease to be accountable as probationers.

The supposition, however, of such extraordinary intervention is really without any authority from scripture. The consideration of the difficulty arising from a 'first resurrection' is accordingly reduced to a single case, which relates exclusively to the exaltation of *the soul*, in its separation from the body, to a higher state of beatitude and glory. And this supposition, although it embrace but a part of the effects to be expected from the Millennium, not only accords best with the literal force

of the Evangelist's text, but with the general tenor of his description. 'And I saw *the souls* of them ' that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and ' for the word of God...and they lived and reigned ' with Christ *a thousand years*. But the rest of *the dead* lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the *first resurrection*.'³³⁶ While the term 'soul,' in this passage, derives its force from its opposition to the phrase 'the dead'; the term 'resurrection,' in the original, properly signifies nothing more than *a change of situation*,³³⁷ when used in a more definitive sense, it is accordingly often qualified with an explanatory phrase, as 'the resurrection to life,' or 'the resurrection from the dead.' This exposition likewise accords best with the difference in the place which is assigned to those blessed spirits, before and after the proclamation of the reign of 'Christ and his saints.' As existing in the previous state, the Evangelist writes of them; 'And when he had *opened the fifth seal*, I saw, *under the altar*, the souls ' of them that were slain for the word of God, and ' for the testimony which they held. And they ' cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O ' Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and

³³⁶ Rev. xx. 4. conf. supr. p. 128.

³³⁷ It is accordingly explained in the Lexicons, 'propriè, ' *erectio, resurrectio jacentis, sedentis, vel lapsi.*' Conf. Schleusn. in voc.

‘avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth.’³³⁸ But, as existing in the subsequent, he writes: ‘And *the seventh angel sounded*; and there were great voices in heaven... And the four and twenty elders, worshipped God, saying.... thy wrath is come... and that *thou shouldst give reward* to thy servants the Prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great.’³³⁹

The change which the blessed spirits are said to experience, as relative, bears reference not only to the depression of their prior state, but the exaltation of that to which they are advanced. The altar was the place of supplication. Here they are doomed, under ‘the fifth seal,’ though in the beatific vision, to offer up their petitions to God; until, in ‘the opening of the seventh,’ their prayers become efficacious, through the incense of the merits of Christ. The ‘reward,’ with which they will then be requited, constitutes the great difference in the state, to which they will be admitted by ‘the first resurrection.’ It is accordingly represented as an investiture in the royal and sacerdotal function. ‘They *become priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*’³⁴⁰ They before knelt in the place of supplication, they now share the seat of royalty. ‘As overcoming temptation, it is granted them *to sit with Christ on his throne,*

³³⁸ Rev. vi. 9, 10.

³³⁹ Ibid. xi. 15, 16. 18.

³⁴⁰ Ibid. xx. 6.

‘ even as he also overcame, and is set down with
 ‘ the Father in his throne.’³⁴¹ Thus participating
 in his exaltation, and sharing his dominion, they
 receive their titles as ‘ kings.’ They before suppli-
 cated ‘ under the altar,’ they are now admitted to
 approach the throne, and have the Holy of Holies
 laid open to their inspection.³⁴² Thus devoted to
 the worship, and everlastinglly occupied in the
 praise of God, they are invested with the character
 of ‘ priests.’ They now join the ‘ ten thousand
 ‘ thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of
 ‘ thousands,’ who are ever occupied in celebrating
 his glory;³⁴³ chaunting the praise of the Lamb.
 ‘ Thou art worthy to take the book and open the
 ‘ seals, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us
 ‘ unto God by thy blood, out of every kingdom and
 ‘ tongue, and people and nation, and hast made us
 ‘ unto our God *kings and priests.*’³⁴⁴

³⁴¹ Rev. iii. 21.

³⁴² Comp. ibid. vi. 9. xi. 19. *supr. p. 115. 120. n. 282.* Burnet
 appears to me to have attained a juster notion of the passage,
 than has elsewhere fallen under my observation. *De Stat. Mort.*
 cap. ix. p. 245. ‘ Capite xi. ver. 15. cùm sonisset tuba angeli
 ‘ septimi, describitur Regnum Christi et Sanctorum : et inter
 ‘ alia dicitur, “ Apertum est Templum Dei in celo : et visa est
 ‘ “ arca Testimonii in ipsius Templo.” Hoc est si rectè inter-
 ‘ pretor, Aperto celo, visum est Shechinah, sive Gloria Christi
 ‘ [Dei], quæ coöperuit arcam fæderis in Sanctuario. Quemadmo-
 ‘ dum Stephanus Protomartyr, aperto celo, vidit Gloriam Dei.’

³⁴³ Rev. iv. 10, 11. v. 13.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid. 9, 10.*

Such, we are assured, will be the earliest and greatest change, which will be produced by the Millennium ; a change which is described under the title of ‘ the first resurrection,’ and which consists, in effect, in the exaltation of the saints and martyrs, to higher and more glorious privileges in heaven. But the kingdom of righteousness, at that time, will not be confined to the blessed mansions which are irradiated by the glory of God : his ‘ will ‘ shall be done in earth as it is in heaven.’³⁴⁵ In the proclamation of the reign of peace and righteousness, by the seventh trumpet, it is accordingly declared ; ‘ there were great voices in heaven, ‘ saying, *the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ* ; and he shall ‘ reign for ever and ever.’³⁴⁶

The commencement of this kingdom upon earth is represented, in the Apocalyptic vision, under the most sublime imagery : it is described as ushered in by two angels, taking their flight through the heavens. ‘ And I saw *another angel* ‘ fly in the midst of heaven, having *the Everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell upon the earth*, ‘ and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, ‘ and people. . . . And there followed *another angel*, ‘ saying, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen ; that great city, because she made all nations drunk with the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*’³⁴⁷

³⁴⁵ Matt. vi. 10.

³⁴⁶ Rev. xi. 15.

³⁴⁷ Ibid. xiv. 6. 8.

Of the connexion of these incidents with the opening of the Millennium, on earth, little doubt can be long entertained. The judgment executed upon the idolatrous city has been already noticed among the signs by which the Great Sabbathism will be immediately preceded.³⁴⁸ It is coupled, in the preceding passage, with the universal dissemination of the light of the Gospel, 'to every nation, 'tongue, and people.' This event, our Lord has expressly declared, shall directly precede the establishment of his kingdom.³⁴⁹ Nor are we given any reason to expect, that this earth will be the scene of any signs, more miraculous, of the arrival of that period, than those which will regularly and silently take effect, in the ordinary course of providence. It is indeed difficult to conceive any extraordinary display of power, which could give more decisive evidence of the interposition of the Omnipotent. As a miracle is but the supernatural change or suspension of those causes, by which nature produces its ordinary effects; it cannot more decidedly prove his direct operation, than the events, which have followed 'the Revelations' of St. John, establish his extraordinary providence.

When the weak instruments by which the propagation of Christianity was effected, and the

³⁴⁸ Vid. *supr.* p. 87. *conf.* *Burnet de Stat. Mort.* cap. ix. p. 231.

³⁴⁹ Vid. *supr.* p. 94, 95, 96.

feeble spark from which its light has arisen, are compared with the magnitude of the object proposed in the Gospel, and the subsequent diffusion of its glories to the ends of the world ; we must acknowledge, in its dissemination, the operation of a power, superior to the casualties and coincidences, by which human events are usually accomplished. The collectors of the evidences in support of Christianity, have accordingly insisted on no proofs with greater force or effect, as evincing its supernatural origin. In regarding its progress, so contrary to the course of mundane events, so diametrically opposed to the motives, which are the main-springs of human actions ; it is as impossible to deny the extraordinary control of a superintending Providence, as it is to doubt the existence of a primary Cause, on beholding the ordinary productions of nature.

Nor has the rise and progress of the extraordinary usurpation, which has been permitted to counteract this gracious purpose, in its accomplishment, happened in a manner more decidedly opposed to the course of natural events, or to the calculation of moral probabilities. The transfer of the authority which has passed from Pagan to Christian hands, according to *human computation*, must have been placed, by the incredible power and magnitude of the Roman Empire, beyond absolute possibility. In the reign of Augustus, which witnessed but the

dawn of that day-star, before which the setting glories of the great luminary atlast declined, it was in its meridian elevation and splendor. The Roman territory then extended from the Euphrates to the Atlantic, in the one direction; and from the Danube and the Rhine to the Desarts of Africa, in the other.³⁵⁰ With the most profound policy, the power of this warlike nation was consolidated, by the distribution of military stations and colonies through their dominions; and the communication facilitated to every part of them, by military roads, and fleets stationed at Misenum and Ravenna.³⁵¹ Their immense population, and inexhaustible resources, their fame, habits and institutions, rendered the permanence of their dominion as morally certain as its magnitude.³⁵² And if it was doomed to give place to a rival power, the probabilities were as decidedly opposed to the presumption, that this power would arise in an obscure sect of their tributaries, the Hebrews. Upon the Jews the Romans looked down with a feeling of ineffable contempt;³⁵³ and the Jews, to a degree of proverbial notoriety, despised the Galileans.³⁵⁴ Had the revolution been suggested, as likely one day to take place, which would seat the successors of

³⁵⁰ Lipsius de Magn. Rom. Lib. I. cap. iii.

³⁵¹ Id. ibid. cap. ii. ³⁵² Id. Lib. II. cap. i. ii. iii.

³⁵³ Tacit. Histor. Lib. V. cap. iv.

³⁵⁴ John vii. 41. 52. Luke xiii. 2.

a Galilean fisherman in the throne, and invest them with the honors of the Cesars ; it is useless to observe with what scorn and derision the suggestion would have been repelled at the court of Augustus. Yet, in the course of time, a change thus extraordinary took place ; and mankind again beheld ambition erect itself in a form more gigantic, on the Palatine hill, and extend its grasp, not only to that earth which the Romans had subdued, but to a world which they had not discovered.

While these extraordinary events attest the power and prescience of God, as exerted in the establishment of Revelation ; it is not reasonable to expect, that greater evidence than they afford will be displayed in confirmation of the Gospel. If, by the ordinary laws to which nature is subjected, philosophers observe, that effects are produced without any waste of force ; from the analogy of the divine operations, it may be concluded, that, in the exercise of an extraordinary providence, there will be no superfluous exertion of power. The evidence on which the truth of Revelation depends, will be without doubt more minutely examined, and more fully comprehended. The conviction which will be thus produced in the minds of those who possess greater information and influence, will display itself in their opinions and practice. Their example will have a necessary effect, in operating on the conviction of some, and in producing a reformation in

others. The extension of the reign of righteousness and peace may thus proceed, though silently yet surely; without any departure from the ordinary course of God's providence, or exertion of preternatural power. For one signal instance of the divine retribution, we are indeed taught to look, in the sentence executed on the idolatrous city, where Antichrist has raised the throne of his usurpation. Perhaps the greatest existing obstacle to the extension of religion will thus be surmounted, in the removal of the barrier which is raised to its advancement, by the tyranny which the adulterous Church exercises over the conscience, and the pollution which she has introduced into the sanctuary. And the judgments, of which she will remain, in her ruins, the lasting monument, must have their influence, in effecting the conversion of those, whose prejudices have become rooted, by inveterate habit, or hereditary obduracy.

We are, indeed, led to expect that 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel' will be included in the converts to the faith; though among the last proselytes, who, in the operation of this special providence for its universal diffusion, will be gathered into the bosom of the Church. That the reconciliation of the Jews will precede the consummation of all things upon earth, is indeed a conclusion in which all expositors are agreed, whether adopting a literal or figurative mode of interpreting scripture.

Whatever difficulty may arise on the precise sense of the prophetical writings,³⁵⁵ on the significancy of the apostolical, there is no room for ambiguity. ‘ For I would not, brethren,’ observes the great Apostle, ‘ that you should be ignorant of this ‘ mystery....that blindness in part is happened ‘ to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be ‘ come in. *And so all Israel shall be saved*: as it ‘ is written, there shall come out of Sion the ‘ Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from ‘ Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when ‘ I shall take away their sins.’³⁵⁶

But from these passages, and others of a like tendency, most of the modern inquirers into the millenary state, have been led to adopt the notion, not merely of the conversion of the Jews to Christianity, but of their temporal restoration at Jerusalem. The opinion has been not only asserted in the ‘ Theory ‘ of the Earth,’³⁵⁷ but maintained in a separate tract,³⁵⁸ by the learned author. And in his views Bishop Newton coincides; although the predictions respecting the restoration of the Jews are not particularly discussed, in ‘ the Dissertations on the Pro- ‘ phecies.’ Advancing in the footsteps of Burnet, he accordingly observes; ‘ We have all imaginable

³⁵⁵ Dan. vii. 14. 22. 27. xii. 1. ³⁵⁶ Rom. xi. 25, 26, 27.

³⁵⁷ Burnet Theory, *ut supr. p. 55.* *Id. de Stat. Mort. cap. ix. p. 256.*

³⁵⁸ *Id. ibid. p. 317. seq. Append. de Judæor. Restaur.*

' reason to believe, since so many of the prophe-
 ' cies are fulfilled, that the remaining prophecies
 ' will be fulfilled also, that there will be yet a
 ' greater harvest of the nations, and *the yet un-*
 ' *converted parts of the earth will be enlightened with*
 ' *the knowledge of the Lord* : that the Jews will,
 ' in God's good time, be converted to Christi-
 ' *anity, and upon their conversion be restored to their*
 ' *native city and country* : and especially since the
 ' state of affairs is such, that *they may return without*
 ' *much difficulty*, having no dominion, no settled
 ' country or fixed property to detain them much
 ' anywhere.³⁵⁹ The theorist, indeed, with still
 greater particularity, after distinguishing between
 the different cases, of their conversion and their
 restoration, observes, with reference to the latter :
 ' The prophets bear hard upon this sense some-
 ' times, as you may see in Isaiah, Ezekiel, Hosea,
 ' Amos. And to the same purpose the ancient
 ' promise of Moses (Deut. xxx.) is interpreted.
 ' Yet this seems to be a thing very inconceivable,
 ' unless we suppose *the ten tribes* to be still in some
 ' hidden corner of the world, *from whence they may*
 ' *be conducted to their own country*, as once out of
 ' Egypt, by a miraculous providence, and estab-
 ' lished there. Which being known, will give the
 ' alarum to all the other Jews in the world, and
 ' *make an universal confluence to their old home*. Then

³⁵⁹ Newton ut supr. Vol. I. p. 144.

‘ our Saviour, by an extraordinary appearance to
 ‘ them, as once to St. Paul (John xix. 37.), and
 ‘ by Prophets (Apoc. i. 7. Matt. xxiii. 39.) raised
 ‘ up among them for that purpose, may convince
 ‘ them, that he is the true Messiah, and convert
 ‘ them to the Christian faith.’³⁶⁰

In dwelling upon the promises, by which the word of prophecy has sought to inspire this ancient people with ‘ faith in a better and heavenly ‘ country;’ the mind is led, by an irresistible charm, to resign itself to the splendid vision of those who look forward to their final restoration. The country which was the scene of the ministry of Christ and his Apostles, is consecrated by so many associations with their labors and character, that, to the coldest imagination, it would wear an appearance of cheerless desolation, unless it were sanctified with their presence. For though we are forbidden to join in the expectation of those who look forward to a day, when the eye shall follow his steps, as he treads his native land, or the ear hang upon his utterance, as he joins in the converse of man, we may indulge for a moment in so divine an illusion. And who could condemn the enthusiasm as misguided, which should desire to behold the holy city, of which prophecy draws so splendid a picture, rising with renovated glory from her ruins? Who, that for a moment acquiesced in the

³⁶⁰ Burnet Theory, p. 55.

reality of the expectation, would not wish to visit the Sion, from which inspiration has deduced its highest theme, to count her bulwarks and battlements, to view the rising magnificence of her Temple, to tread her courts, and hear of her holy place, her ark, her mercy-seat, and her cherubim ?

The illusion, however, can deceive but with a momentary lustre; and at once disperses, when submitted to the penetrating light of truth. Since the abolition of the Law, and subversion of the ceremonial in the ruins of the Temple, such an expectation seems to be as little reconcilable with the spirit of the Gospel, as with the history of its rise and propagation. For to what purpose could such a temporal restitution tend, unless to restore, with the city and Temple, ' the weak, ' unprofitable, and beggarly elements,' which have long since decayed and passed away?³⁶¹ If the Jews, thus reinstated in their ancient country, are to be recognised as a different people from the Christians, when we are assured that all distinction between Jew and Gentile has been abolished by Christ ;³⁶² they must retain the national badge of Judaism, in circumcision, and with it an obligation to the observance of the whole Law.³⁶³ But how is this supposition to be reconciled with the distinction

³⁶¹ Gal. iv. 9. Heb. vii. 18. viii. 13.

³⁶² Gal. iii. 28. 2 Cor. v. 17.

³⁶³ Gal. v. 3. iii. 10.

which is made between the New Covenant, as established, and the Old, as ' ready to vanish away,'³⁶⁴ how rendered consistent with the express declaration, that ' he taketh away the first, that he may ' establish the second ?'³⁶⁵ In what terms could it be, in fact, more explicitly declared, that both Covenants could not exist at the same time ?

In support of this notion of a temporal reign of Christ, upon earth, it has been, however, urged with some shew of plausibility,³⁶⁶ that our Lord never denied, that he was a king ; and that his kingdom would be one day established on earth. And not a little stress is laid upon the declaration which was made by him to the disciples, at the last supper, in order to prove that he will, once more, reign in it with the saints, when it is renovated, and his enemies are subdued. ' But I say ' unto you, *I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of* ' *the vine*, until that day when *I drink it new with* ' *you in my Father's kingdom.*'³⁶⁷ And in still stronger terms, he declared, ' Ye are they which ' have continued with me in my temptations. And ' I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath ' appointed unto me ; that *ye may eat and drink* ' *at my table*, in my kingdom, and sit on thrones ' judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'³⁶⁸ ' The

³⁶⁴ Heb. viii. 13.

³⁶⁵ Ibid. x. 9.

³⁶⁶ Burnet de Stat. Mort. p. 224. n. *

³⁶⁷ Matt. xxvi. 29.

³⁶⁸ Luke xxii. 29, 30.

‘ kingdom of God ’ is a phrase which is, however, used with such latitude of meaning,³⁶⁹ that it seems not possible to identify, in the preceding declarations, a particular state on *the earth*; more especially as our Lord has so expressly declared, that ‘ his kingdom is not of this world.’³⁷⁰

But the difficulties in which such an opinion is involved become inextricably embarrassed, by the consideration, that our Lord, after his resurrection, not only ‘ eat and drank ’ with the disciples,³⁷¹ but communicated with them,³⁷² as at the last supper. All ‘ power was then given unto him, in heaven and in earth,’³⁷³ and in constituting them his Apostles to the ends of the earth, he made them the depositaries of this power; consequently from that time may be dated the foundation of his kingdom.³⁷⁴ In this opinion the disciples appear to have themselves implicitly acquiesced; as we may collect, from the question proposed to him, before his ascension, relative to the restoration of ‘ the kingdom of Israel.’³⁷⁵ As the difficulties of his declaration, that ‘ they should eat and drink with him in his kingdom,’ admits of this satisfactory explanation, from the short time of his abode with them,

³⁶⁹ Luke xvii. 20, 21. ix. 27. xi. 20. ³⁷⁰ John xviii. 36.

³⁷¹ Acts x. 41. John xxi. 12, 13. ³⁷² Luke xxiv. 30.

³⁷³ Matt. xxviii. 18.

³⁷⁴ Matt. xxiv. 14. Acts i. 3. viii. 12. xxviii. 31.

³⁷⁵ Acts i. 7.

after his resurrection ; it is surely preposterous to have recourse to the supposition of a reign, for one thousand years, upon earth, to verify the assertion.

We need not, therefore, take the question out of its present latitude, or cite additional authority from scripture,³⁷⁶ in refutation of so gross and unworthy a supposition. A very few texts were indeed considered, in the estimation of the ancient Fathers, adequate to the subversion of an opinion, which was not merely rejected by them, as heterodox, but stigmatised, as heretical.³⁷⁷ They considered it sufficient to appeal to the example of the Patriarchs, who were so far from looking for such an establishment in the promised land, that ‘ they were not mindful of that country from whence they came out, but desired a better, that is a heavenly.’³⁷⁸ In confutation of this gross expectation of a future state, with earthly and sensual gratifications, they deemed it sufficient to quote the testimony of the Apostle ; ‘ meats for the belly, and the belly for meats : but God shall destroy both it and them.’³⁷⁹

But possibly a stress may be still laid upon that part of our Lord’s promise to the disciples, in which it was declared, ‘ that he appointed unto them a kingdom, and they should sit on thrones

³⁷⁶ John iv. 21. 1 Tim. ii. 8. Matt. xxii. 30. Rom. xiv. 17.

³⁷⁷ Hier. Com. in Esai. lviii. ad fin. conf. ut supr. p. 17. n. 42.

³⁷⁸ Heb. xi. 16. ³⁷⁹ 1 Cor. vi. 13.

‘ judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’³⁸⁰ If this declaration is admitted in the literal sense, to which I have nothing to object; it is to be understood of the time of the saints’ inauguration in heaven.³⁸¹ It must be thus understood of sacramental participation, and therefore admits of a direct explanation ‘ from the tree of life, in the midst of the paradise of God and the heavenly manna, of which he will give to eat, to him that overcometh.’³⁸² And this explanation derives confirmation, not merely from the circumstances under which the declaration was made to the disciples, as delivered during the time in which they partook of the last supper; but from the memorable discourse, in which he explained the spiritual nature of that communion.³⁸³

As the evangelical scriptures are thus found to afford so little support to the notion, that the kingdom of Israel will be restored, and Christ erect and occupy his throne at Jerusalem; recourse is necessarily had, in support of that opinion, to the prophetical writings. As the inspired authors of these works have particularly foretold the restoration of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, it cannot excite surprise that, from their descriptions, evidence might with a little ingenuity be adduced, in support of an opinion which fixed on the ancient Chilias the imputation of heresy.

³⁸⁰ Luke xxii. 30.

³⁸¹ Vid. supr. p. 144.

³⁸² Rev. ii. 7. 17.

³⁸³ John vi. 31. 48—51.

After a particular induction of authorities, which are collected by the theorist,³⁸⁴ with a view to the establishment of this point ; he lays down a general principle, which he undertakes to prove, by the establishment of three positions. The Prophets, he asserts, while they speak expressly of the restoration of the Jews under the Messiah, distinguish that event by such characters of peace sanctity and happiness, as can belong to no previous restitution with which history has acquainted us : and consequently, as these inspired persons cannot err, their descriptions must necessarily refer to a future restoration, in which these predictions will be fully accomplished.³⁸⁵ These characters he proceeds to enumerate under different heads, as moral, political, and natural ; and further distinguishes them by the qualities of permanence and universality.³⁸⁶ Into this distribution of the subject it is, however, not necessary to enter ; as the argument is exposed to a fundamental objection, by which, I am wholly deceived, or its subversion may be effected.

The conclusions of the theorist are unfortunately built on a partial and limited statement. While he multiplies examples of the promises of restoration and prosperity made to the Jews ; he overlooks the denunciations of dispersion and calamity with

³⁸⁴ Burnet Append. de Jud. Restaur. Sect. I. II. p. 317. sq.

³⁸⁵ Id. ibid. Sect. III. p. 399.

³⁸⁶ Id. ibid. p. 400.

which they were menaced. He proceeds on an assumption, that the terms of restitution were not conditionally proposed, but the event absolutely determined. While his conclusion required him to disprove, that the fulfilment of the purpose was contingent, as the terms under which it was proposed were merely conditional; he assumes that it was positively fixed, and thence infers its final accomplishment. His refutation must consequently follow, as matter of course, on shewing that, while the restoration of the Jews was absolutely determined, the promise of peace security and happiness was rendered wholly dependant on the conditions of future obedience. And as it is notorious, that they did not comply with the proffered terms; they necessarily forfeited the benefits resulting from the promise, and frustrated its future accomplishment.

It cannot be deemed necessary, for the establishment of this counter position, to engage in a laborious induction of authorities, while examples may be found in every page of the prophetical writings. The evidence of its truth is so multifarious, that it might be accumulated, without trouble, from the scriptures of the Christians not less than the Hebrews.³⁸⁷ In fact, so clear is the light in which

³⁸⁷ Deut. xxviii. 15—68. 2 Chron. vi. 16. Isaiah i. 16—20. Jerem. iv. 1—14—27. Ezek. iii. 4. 7. 11. 17—21. Dan. ix. 4—16. Mal. iii. 7—12. Acts iii. 22, 23.

this point is placed by the evangelical writers, that after the single decision of St. Paul, it is impossible to conceive, with what prospect of success the question can be mooted. In pressing on the Hebrews, the urgent motives which should induce them to embrace the terms of the Gospel, he warns them by the example of their forefathers, who failed in attaining the promises, by refusing the terms of acceptance.³⁸⁸ And in exciting the emulation of the Israelites by the example of the Gentiles, who succeeded to the inheritance, from which they excluded themselves by their infidelity ; he expressly imputes the excision of the Jews to their rejection of the proposed conditions.³⁸⁹

It is indeed certain, that besides the absolute determination of God, to restore the Jews from captivity to their native land, he has expressed an intention not less determinate, to extend to the whole nation, at a particular time, the arms of his mercy, and assign them peace and security in the bosom of his kingdom. This is, indeed, particularly asserted by St. Paul, in assigning their obstinate infidelity, as the cause of their rejection.³⁹⁰ The exception, however, has no other effect, but to strengthen the general principle ; as it makes their restoration to favor, dependant on their faith in the Messiah, and thus, in effect, establishes its

³⁸⁸ Heb. iii. 7—12—18, 19.

³⁸⁹ Rom. xi. 4. 7—10. 20.

³⁹⁰ Ibid. 26.

character as conditional. But the various circumstances of their condition, however complicated, are effectually reconciled, in the simple consideration of their conversion to Christianity, without any regard to *a second* restoration to Judea. As all the promises are given in Christ,³⁹¹ their reconciliation can only follow on their turning to faith in his mediation, without which they forfeit all claim to reconciliation or security.³⁹² And when admitted to the salvation which he has purchased, there is nothing to excite their hope, or reward their exertions, on this side 'the heavenly and better kingdom' to which the Patriarchs exclusively looked, for the fulfilment of the promises.³⁹³

Instead of thus forming an arbitrary conception of a second and temporal restoration of the Jews, of which not the smallest intimation is contained in the Prophets; if we keep our attention fixed on the separate conditions acknowledged by their inspired writings, on the one side, and by our own scriptures, on the other, and limited by them to a *former restoration*, and a *future conversion*; we shall obtain an easy solution of every difficulty in the case of this extraordinary people. From thence we may even deduce a vindication of the immutable character of the divine purposes, not less than a justification of the conditional nature of the divine

³⁹¹ 2 Cor. i. 20. ³⁹² Acts iii. 22, 23.

³⁹³ Heb. xi. 16. Philip. iii. 3—8.

dispensations. All that has been promised, will, in the good time of the Almighty Disposer, be infallibly accomplished. But we easily ascertain, in the circumstances of the prediction, what we are chiefly concerned in proving, that, as far as it included the promise to the Jews of restitution to their native land, it has been fulfilled in their former restoration. As far as the characters of peace security and permanence are implied in the prediction, without inducing the consequence of a second restoration, they will follow indefectibly and simply, from their conversion to Christianity.

In order to substantiate the antecedent position, it is merely necessary to insist on the circumstantial precision with which *the Temple* is introduced in the prophetical descriptions. That the views of the Prophets were fixed upon a time, in which *it would be standing*, appears in the circumstances under which they declared the city should be rebuilt, and the polity re-established. It is thus not less expressly declared by Zechariah, ‘ therefore thus saith the Lord, I am returned to ‘ Jerusalem with mercies ; *my house shall be built* ‘ *in it*, saith the Lord of Hosts, and *a line shall* ‘ *be stretched forth upon Jerusalem* ;²⁹⁴ than it is declared, ‘ *Jerusalem shall be inhabited* as towns ‘ without walls, for the multitude of men and cattle ‘ therein : for I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a

²⁹⁴ Zechar. i. 16.

' wall of fire round about, and *will be the glory in the midst of her.*³⁹⁵ Of the city and temple to which the prophetical vision was directed, it was not less expressly declared, that it should be sanctified by the presence of the promised Messiah. ' Behold I will send my Messenger before my face, and he shall prepare the way before me : ' *and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his Temple, even the Angel of the Covenant whom ye delight in : behold he shall come saith the Lord of Hosts.*³⁹⁶ And, as another Prophet expressly declares ; ' I will shake all nations, and *the Desire of all nations shall come ; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts.*³⁹⁷ As the promise of restoration to the Jews, comprehends such a condition, it can require no labor of proof to evince, that as it is now rendered impracticable by the destruction of the Temple, we must look, for its accomplishment, not to their future, but to their past restoration.

In turning to the millennial state, within which we are led to expect the Jews will be included, we readily discover,³⁹⁸ that, in it, all the characters of the restoration originally promised them, whether moral political or natural, will be fulfilled, and all the splendid views of the prophetical vision be realised. Then shall the Lord ' make her officers

³⁹⁵ Zechar. ii. 4, 5. ³⁹⁶ Malach. iii. 1.

³⁹⁷ Haggai, ii. 7. ³⁹⁸ Vid. Burnet, ubi supr. p. 344.

' peace, and her exactors righteousness. Violence
 ' shall no more be heard in the land, wasting
 ' nor destruction within their borders ; but they
 ' shall call their walls Salvation, and their gates
 ' Peace.³⁹⁹ All that imagination can conceive, or
 that inspiration has foretold, of civil and religious
 excellence, in that happy state, will elevate and
 adorn their condition. In their conduct they will
 evince that sincerity in penitence, and perseverance
 in righteousness, which constitute moral beauty :
 in public life enjoy the liberty peace and security
 which spring from a wise and enlightened policy ; in
 private, experience the ease and prosperity which
 flow from a gracious and beneficent providence.
 But to possess these exalted privileges it cannot
 be deemed necessary, that they should be restored
 to their paternal land and city. Of that Prince,
 into whose service they will be naturalized, the
 word of prophecy has declared ; ' And there was
 ' given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom,
 ' *that all people, nations, and languages should serve*
 ' *him* : his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
 ' and his kingdom that which shall not be des-
 ' troyed.⁴⁰⁰ And in the proclamation, in which
 the commencement of his reign was announced,
 amid the acclamation of angels, it is not less ex-
 pressly declared ; ' and there were great voices in
 ' heaven, saying, *the kingdoms of this world are*

³⁹⁹ Is. ix. 17, 18.

⁴⁰⁰ Dan. vii. 14.

*'become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.'*⁴⁰¹ Of an authority which is thus described as unbounded ; which, as universal and eternal, can know no limits of place or time ; they must surely form but mean and inadequate ideas, who suppose that its exercise can be confined to a particular site ; whatever be the associations by which that favored spot may be hallowed.⁴⁰²

While under this twofold consideration, every difficulty in the predicted destiny of the Jews admits of a satisfactory solution ; nothing can be more arbitrary or unjustifiable, than the view which is generally taken of their past and future allotment. While their positive restoration from the Babylonish captivity, and subsequent dispersion under the Romans are overlooked ; a convenient transition is made to a second and absolute restitution, which is considered the proper subject of the prophetical revelations, to the utter exclusion of the first and conditional restoration. Of those who insist on the plenary accomplishment of the prophecies, respecting that event, it is surely no more than reasonable to require, that they should identify in those predictions the fourfold state of this people, which is implied in their hypothesis. And when they have traced in the inspired pages,

⁴⁰¹ Rev. xi. 15.

⁴⁰² Vid. Orig. contr. Cels. Lib. IV. cap. xxii. p. 517. a.

the four successive conditions, of captivity and temporary restitution, of dispersion and final restoration; it would be incumbent on them to reconcile the notion of a repeated restitution, with the tenor of the prophetical description.

Should even this task be performed, we shall find much that remains to be accomplished, and that will induce a conviction, how far we must look beyond the circumstances of a temporal restoration, for the conditions which will be adequate to solve every difficulty in the extraordinary case of this people. In the prophetical descriptions, on which so much stress is laid by the advocates for a temporal establishment of the Jews at Jerusalem, there is much which no method of literal interpretation can reconcile with their favorite position. A single example will establish the point, as fully as the most extensive induction.

‘*Rejoice ye with Jerusalem,*’ declares the Prophet Isaiah, with reference to the promised restoration, ‘*be glad with her....for thus saith the Lord,*’ ‘*behold, I will extend peace to her like a river,*’ ‘*and the glory of the Gentiles, like a flowing stream*’ ‘*....And I will send those that escape unto the*’ ‘*nations....and they shall declare my glory among*’ ‘*the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your*’ ‘*brethren, for an offering unto the Lord, out of all*’ ‘*nations....to my holy mountain Jerusalem....And*

⁴⁰³ *Isaiah lxvi. 10. 19, 20, 21. 23.*

‘ I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord. . . . And it shall come to pass, that *from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me*, saith the Lord.’⁴⁰³ In such descriptions the natural impossibility of the case compels us, in the illustration of their force, to have recourse to a figurative exposition. By the impracticability of the supposition, that all nations shall repair to Jerusalem ‘ from sabbath to sabbath,’ we are necessarily forced to abandon the literal signification. The limits of interpretation being thus indefinitely enlarged; the literal restoration of the Jews can be less certainly proved from such authorities, than the final conversion of all nations. For of the different senses which may be extracted from the text, the latter is encumbered with the fewest difficulties.

The preceding view of the ultimate allotment of the Jews, however opposed to notions at present indulged of their future destiny, is not without the support of ancient and modern authority. Of the primitive Fathers, who, from the earliest to the latest period, maintained the universal conversion of the Jews,⁴⁰⁴ many of the most highly reputed have rejected the notion of their temporal restora-

⁴⁰⁴ Tertul. adv. Marc. Lib. III. cap. xxiiij. August. Civ. Dei Lib. XX. cap. xxix.

tion, as unsupported by scripture.⁴⁰⁵ And of the members of their own communion, who have conformed to the Christian faith, one atleast of the most learned and enlightened has controverted the supposition, with a force of reasoning, which appears to be invincible.⁴⁰⁶

Among the glories with which the millennial reign will be distinguished upon earth, we must therefore abandon the notion, that the Temple will be rebuilt, or the Jews re-established in Palestine. And with this illusion, the splendid vision vanishes, that our Lord will return to this earth with the Apostles, and the throne of David be again raised up, and established for one thousand years at Jerusalem. However certainly fixed in the reveries of modern seers, the supposition derives no authority from the inspiration of the Prophets. Of so unpropitious an error, advantage may be readily taken, in advancing the projects of the adversaries Christ's kingdom, from whose ambitious schemes much of that calamity may be expected, which is a distinguishing sign of the great consummation.⁴⁰⁷ Among the marks by which its approach may be

⁴⁰⁵ Vid. Barnab. Epist. cap. v. xv. Origen. contr. Cels. Lib. IV. cap. xxii. Hilar. in Ps. cxviii. 18. Didym. de Spir. Sanct. Lib. III. ad init. Chrysost. contr. Jud. Orat. v. Hieron. Com. in Esai. lxvi. 21. Dionys. ap eund. ibid. in proœm. lib. xviii.

⁴⁰⁶ Meyer, ubi supr. p. 148.

⁴⁰⁷ Vid. supr. p. 98.

discerned, we are taught to expect the appearance of false Messiahs,⁴⁰⁸ who will no doubt make that grand object the aim and end of their ambition. And by an extraordinary waywardness or fatality, a secret association extends its roots through every part of these kingdoms, to the interests of which multitudes are blindly and inconsiderately bound, under the most tremendous obligations ; an association, which, while it holds forth the promotion of fraternal union as its professed purpose, has the restoration of the Jewish Temple for its specific object.⁴⁰⁹ What may be the political results of

⁴⁰⁸ Matt. xxiv. 24.

⁴⁰⁹ It may be, perhaps, necessary to explain here, that the writer of this work neither is, nor ever has been, a member of any masonic or secret society. He resisted (as he trusts, providentially) every advance to induce him to become one, from an avowed conviction, that if not intended to oppose, they were constituted to supersede Christianity. After an investigation, carefully prosecuted, he congratulates himself with the conviction, that his presentiments were but too solidly founded. What he has advanced on the subject of these societies, above, is founded upon a work, intended only for the initiated, and accordingly written in cryptographic characters. It required, however, but a slight exertion of ingenuity to decypher the mysteries of the cabbala, in which the arcana of the craft is concealed. And, as the only method of gaining credit to his assertions, he now publishes the discovery, for the benefit of those who may be drawn into such associations, under the idea that *the secrets* of which they profess to be the depositories, consist of anything but the most sublime fooleries. The secret

such a combination of power, is no problem for the solution of the statesman's sagacity ; but may be read in the convulsions, with which, at this moment, the frame of social order is shaken to its foundation in Europe. Whatever be the projects, to which chance or opportunity may hereafter direct this combination of forces ; in *the restitution of the Temple of Jerusalem*, there is an indirect

cyphers under which this profoundly anile lore is concealed, are of two kinds. One consists in an inversion of the order of the letters of words, in such a manner that the last and first of the characters are successively withdrawn, and thrown into a new combination, according to the mode expressed in this scale ;

2 4 6 8 9 7 5 3 1.

By this device, ' where was ' is transformed into *hrwsaeew* ; ' your friend ' into *orrednifuy*, &c. The other kind, which belongs to a higher degree, consists in a substitution of the letters of the alphabet, arranged in an inverted order, according to this scale ;

a b c d e f g h i k l m

z y x w v u t s r p o n

The characters of the upper line being substituted for those of the lower, or contrariwise ; *Gvnkov* is used to express ' Temple ; ' *klxs*, ' porch ; ' *slfhv*, ' house ; ' *xfyrgh*, ' cubits,' &c. This system of cryptography is evidently founded on the Hebrew Cabbala, and appears to have been invented by Jews ; as indeed the object of the association, which is directed to the rebuilding of the Temple, very fully establishes. The work from which this information has been deduced by the author is Finch's Masonic Treatise, 1802. Deal. It bears a seal on the title, and has prefixed to it the approbation of several Masters of Lodges.

object, to which those secret societies solemnly pledge themselves, with scarcely their own consciousness or concurrence, from the progressional nature of their initiation in the mysteries of the Cabbala. And should that object be undertaken, by the fellow-members of their order ; they have bound themselves, under the most dreadful obligations, not merely to withhold from them their hostility, but to extend to them the charities of brethren. While the secret object of these unsuspecting enemies to Christianity co-operates with the misguided zeal of its warm, though injudicious friends ; the restoration of the Jews to their native land and city, may become a project which will receive not only countenance, but support. Thus may the ends of the great Antichristian conspiracy be forwarded, and under the mistaken supposition that by the success of such a measure, the intentions of providence would be promoted. And let the method, by which God's gracious purposes are accomplished, be what it may ; we have authority for believing that, as he can bring good out of evil, even by such indirect means and unconscious instruments his views will be consummated. For ' the mystery of iniquity ' enters, atleast by his all-wise permission, into the scheme of his revealed purposes ; and by the advancement of such a visionary project, we may atleast discern, that its tendency to its ultimate object may be encreased,

without any violation of the ordinary course of his providence.

The signs of the special interposition of providence, with which the kingdom of righteousness will commence upon earth, we must therefore conclude, will be confined to those evidences of the divine power and prescience, of which the two angels, by whom the Evangelist beheld it ushered in, are represented as making proclamation, in their flight through the heavens.³¹⁰ Beyond the universal diffusion of the Law of Christ, in 'the Everlasting Gospel to the ends of the world;' and the dissolution of the authority of Antichrist, in the destruction of the seat of his dominion, in the mystical Babylon, of which those winged messengers were the heralds; we have no reason to expect, that any further evidence of the divine intervention will attend the opening of the Millennium. Had those great events, which are superinduced on the revelations of the Evangelist, by the interpreters of his views, formed a part of the omniscient purposes, it is inconceivable that he should have passed them over, without record or observation. In unfolding the destinies of the Church, under the vision of 'the seventh seal,' an occasion presented itself to the Apostle, for introducing the restoration of the Jews, and rebuilding of Jerusalem; by which these expositors would supply

³¹⁵ Vid. supr. p. 146.

the deficiencies of his revelations from the plenitude of their own information. And his explicitness, on other occasions, renders his silence on this subject the more inadmissible : as he minutely details the dimensions of the New Jerusalem, which he describes, not as erected upon earth, but as descending from heaven.⁴¹¹ But, in describing the Lamb, as attended with those who were sealed from among the twelve tribes, he represents them as stationed upon Mount Sion,⁴¹² yet without the most distant allusion to the rebuilding of Jerusalem, or the Temple, which he is particular in stating was wanting in the heavenly city.⁴¹³

It has been already intimated, that, in the revelations included under 'the seventh seal,' every intricacy in which the doctrine of the Millennium is involved, may find a satisfactory solution.⁴¹⁴ It supplies also the best clue, in unraveling the difficulties which may be opposed to the attainment of an accurate idea of its nature. As the analogy has been established between that part of the Apocalyptic vision and the Jubilee year;⁴¹⁵ and as the nature and constitution of this festival are fully ascertained, we may thence acquire a just idea of the great period to which it has been assimilated. But the Jubilee, and every septenary of the Levitical service were instituted in commemoration of

⁴¹¹ Rev. 2. 10—21.

⁴¹² Comp. Rev. xiv. 1. vii. 4.

⁴¹³ Ibid. xxi. 22.

⁴¹⁴ Vid. supr. p. 126.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid. p. 121.

the seven days, in which the Creation occurred ; consequently, as the seventh day of the primeval week was a sabbath of rest, the seventh period of each cycle became a proper sabbatism. Such, it has been already remarked, was the Jubilee ; and such, we have now to observe, will be the Millennium.

The commonest term by which the Millennium is designated, and from which, indeed, a general idea of its nature and properties may be deduced, is that of a sabbatism. Under this term it is equally recognised by the Jews and the Christians ; and among the latter, not merely by the commentators on the scripture text, but by its inspired authors. But so close is the connexion subsisting between all the septenary cycles, that, even from the shortest of these periods, the nature of the Millennium may be in a great measure determined.

In the Sabbath we acknowledge a time appropriated to rest ;⁴¹⁶ in that Great Sabbath we are led to expect a period exempt from toil and trouble. As in the one we behold a time in which worldly occupation yields to an observance of religious duty,⁴¹⁷ in the other we await a period, in which all desire ambition and interest will be absorbed in universal charity to mankind, and intense and unabated devotion to the Sovereign Ruler. As

⁴¹⁶ Gen. ii. 3. Exod. xx. 10. Deut. v. 14.

⁴¹⁷ Exod. ibid. 8. Deut. ibid. 12.

the purpose for which the one was instituted, was that of worshipping God as the Creator, and of praising him for the works which he had made;⁴¹⁸ the business of the other will be to carry the purposes of his special providence into full effect, to honor him by a life of exalted devotion and unbounded beneficence. As the sum of religion is comprised in the discharge of those duties which we owe to God and to our fellow-creatures;⁴¹⁹ the state in which it is rendered absolutely perfect⁴²⁰ must be necessarily distinguished by these essentials of true religion, unabated love to the one, and unbounded charity to the other.

From the analogy of the Sabbath, we may thus derive no inadequate idea of the state which will be enjoyed under the Millennium; as we are so far enabled to conclude, that it will be a time perpetually consecrated to rest and religion. To convey a simple and intelligible idea of its nature, it may be consequently represented as a time of religious repose, in which every day shall be spent, as the precepts and example of our Lord have taught us, *the sabbath should be now passed*, in works of charity and devotion. In this view the notion of a sabbatism, as far as it is implied in the term, is not only answered, as this state will consist of

⁴¹⁸ Exod. xx. 11. comp. Rev. iv. 11.

⁴¹⁹ Matt. xxii. 37—40.

⁴²⁰ Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Zechar. viii. 8. Heb. viii. 10.

a perpetual sabbath ; but the idea will be fully realised, which revelation inculcates of ‘the kingdom of God,’ which will be then established on earth, and which his word has assured us, ‘is ‘righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy ‘Ghost.’⁴²¹

With reference to the religious contemplation in which the mind, in this happy state, will be principally engaged, and which forms no inconsiderable part of its intellectual enjoyment, it has been observed with great truth and comprehensiveness ; ‘The contemplation of God and his works comprehends all things ; for the one makes the un-created world, and the other the created. And ‘as the divine essence and attributes are the greatest objects that the mind of man can set before ‘itself ; so next to that are the effects and emanations of the Divinity, or the works of the divine ‘goodness, wisdom, and power, in the created ‘world. This hath a vast extent and variety, and ‘would be sufficient to entertain the time, in that ‘happy state, much longer than a thousand years.’⁴²²

In this intellectual exercise, as every object of sense will keep the conviction of a present Divinity always predominant in the mind ; all Science will necessarily assume the character of Religion. In every object of the creation we shall regard not

⁴²¹ Rom. xiv. 17.

⁴²² Burnet Theory, ut supr. p. 295.

merely the properties of matter and motion, but behold the attributes of wisdom and power, displayed in the form and organization of his works, by the omniscient Creator. Instead of investigating the laws of nature, our inquiries will be directed in search of the scheme and operations of providence. Our knowledge of those laws and properties, which is now limited and obscure, will thus become clear and extended, from more enlarged experience and continued exercise. Of the divine economy, of which our conception is now vague and imperfect, our views will become more just and comprehensive. And as our conceptions of the nature and attributes of God, and of the modes of his providence, will be improved and heightened, our devotion will be animated by the perpetual sense of his presence, and felicity sublimed by the constant enjoyment of his communion.

Of the religious service which will form a principal part of the occupation of mankind, in this state, our knowledge does not depend upon mere inference or deductions from the inspired word, but rests on the express authority of scripture. In the beatific state, in which the Great Sabbath is celebrated by the saints and martyrs in heaven, as faith with them is lost in fruition, practical religion will necessarily give place to devotional exercise. As witnessed by the Prophet, in the Apocalyptic vision, the praise of God and of the Lamb will be

A a 2

their unvaried theme, and the adoration of both their constant occupation. ‘They rest not day and night, saying, holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, that was, and is, and is to come. And when those cherubim give glory and honor and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever. The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sitteth on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.’⁴²³ As the millenary state will extend also to earth, in which ‘the will of God will be done as in heaven,’ though less effectually, yet not less sincerely; the earthly service will participate in the nature of the heavenly devotion. In the vision of the Evangelist, every living creature is not merely represented, as uttering his praise in the same language; but as uniting in the strains in which the angels express their homage. ‘And I beheld, and I heard *the voice of many angels* round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands... And every creature which is in heaven *and on earth*, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea,

⁴²³ Rev. iv. 8—11.

‘ and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing,
 ‘ and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him
 ‘ that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb
 ‘ for ever and ever. And the four beasts said,
 ‘ Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell
 ‘ down and worshipped him that liveth for ever
 ‘ and ever.’⁴²⁴

As moral improvement, in this state, must advance with religious cultivation, the irascible and concupiscent passions will be brought under the absolute control of reason. When they are no longer pampered by indulgence, or inflamed by intemperance, the contest between moral approbation and animal gratification, which at present distracts us in the choice between good and evil, will be at an end. And as those lowering and stormy elements shall subside, which, in disturbing the quiet and impeding the view, unfit the mind for dispassionate judgment; in her election of good, she will be not more influenced by its solid worth, than attracted by its loveliness and beauty.

While human nature thus continues to advance in the moral and religious scale; every social tie which binds us to each other will be strengthened and extended. As the motives of duty are heightened, and its exercise increased, the sphere of our happiness will be enlarged and exalted. When charity is perfect and diffusive, gentleness and

⁴²⁴ Rev. v. 11. 13, 14.

beneficence must succeed to strife and anger. The natural evils to which humanity is subject, if not altogether banished from this state, will be immeasurably diminished. Not only the ills which are inflicted by external violence will be unknown, but the maladies engendered by intemperance, and the diseases contracted from hereditary infection. And if some of the dregs of natural evil still lurk in the bottom of the cup, and embitter the draught; if pain still beset the path of infirmity, or disease hover round the bed of old age; charity will hold its vigils by the sufferer's couch, and if unable to remove the ill, will bring it an assuasive. Even for all the evil that it is unable to relieve, Providence, in its mercy, will provide a lenitive: for, although it permit pain to afflict the frame, it will pour the balm of resignation into the bosom. Nor under the load of protracted suffering, shall joy itself be a stranger to the breast of the righteous; since, 'having respect to the recompence of the reward,'⁴²⁵ he shall feel, 'that our light affliction, ' which is for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'⁴²⁶

It is, therefore, nugatory to object to this state, the perfection of which consists not in its natural, but its moral excellence; that, as obnoxious to care, and want, and disease, it falls short of the ideal bliss which is essential to a state of para-

⁴²⁵ Heb. xi. 26.

⁴²⁶ 2 Cor. iv. 17.

disaical enjoyment.⁴²⁷ The conception, it must be obvious, on the other hand, is really gross and carnal, which supposes uninterrupted ease and abundance necessary, even to human enjoyment in this present life,⁴²⁸ not to mention their incompatibily with the preparatory discipline for a future. On the contrary, no deficiency can be felt, where plenty is replaced by moderation, and cupidity by contentment. In a state where charity is universally diffusive, penury and want can rarely, if ever, find a place ; for where the means of relief exist, it will be necessarily imparted. Beyond the supply of the wants of nature, there will be little to covet or enjoy. To him whose desires are brought under a proper discipline, the pomps of this world will not be more vain, than its superfluities will be cumbrous and oppressive. And should his worldly portion be even smaller than his needs ; as ‘ his ‘ treasures are laid up in heaven, where neither ‘ moth nor rust doth corrupt,’⁴²⁹ he can have as little reason to apprehend for their loss, as cause to pine at their insufficiency.

As the human race, however, will still be obnoxious to death, this state of millennial happiness will unavoidably be exposed to one natural evil. For the Evangelist declares, that not until the second resurrection, when the dead, small and

⁴²⁷ Burnet Theory, ut supr. p. 260.

⁴²⁸ Ibid. p. 261.

⁴²⁹ Matt. vi. 20.

‘great, shall stand before God,’ shall ‘death and hell be cast into the lake of fire.’⁴³⁰ But while he makes this disclosure, he has not left those whose lot it may be, to exchange this state of righteousness and peace, for the gloom and silence of the grave, without a consolation. After describing the mission of the three angels, who were the harbingers of the reign of peace upon earth ; he received a divine communication, which brought the assurance to mankind, that this evil will not be without its palliative. ‘Here’ he declares ‘is the patience of the saints : here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. ‘And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, ‘Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord *from henceforth* : yea, saith the Spirit, *that they may rest from their labors : and their works do follow them.*’⁴³¹

In order fully to comprehend these consolatory words, it is, in the first place, necessary to distinguish between the state of ‘the souls of those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, who shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years ;’⁴³² and of ‘the rest of the dead that live not again, until the thousand years are finished,’ when they shall ‘stand before God and be judged, every man according to his works.’⁴³³ The death of

⁴³⁰ Rev. xx. 12. 14.

⁴³¹ Ibid. xiv. 12, 13.

⁴³² Ibid. xx. 4, 5.

⁴³³ Ibid. 12, 13.

both of these orders of mankind, it is obvious, must precede the opening of the Millennium; but besides them, there is a third race, whose departure from this life will take place *during its continuance*. As it is plain that the words of the Evangelist can have no reference to the two former; they must be understood, as applied to the last, with which their connexion is apposite and obvious. The blessing which is promised to those, who shall be withdrawn from that state of happiness by death, will consequently consist in the immediate admission of their souls into a state of rest and beatitude. They shall be at once assigned their place in the realms of glory; as the remembrance of 'their good works shall follow them,'⁴³⁴ in their translation. While the rest of 'the dead,' who have departed previously to that time, await the sentence of the last judgment; they shall ascend at once to 'the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, ' to the innumerable company of angels. . . . to God 'the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men 'made perfect.'⁴³⁵ As death will be thus regarded as the gate, through which they are to pass, from their present pilgrimage, to a higher and more blissful abode; instead of being dreaded as the goal of natural ill, it will be hailed as the entrance to joy and immortality.

⁴³⁴ Rev. xiv. 13.

⁴³⁵ Heb. xii. 22, 23.

While this view of the Evangelist's account of the heavenly 'voice,' by which he was addressed, derives considerable support from the time of the Apocalyptic vision, at which he declares it was uttered ; it receives still greater confirmation from several passages of scripture, which allude to the beatific state, into which the sainted spirits are admitted, when released by death from the body. In his account of their inauguration, after 'the first resurrection,' he particularly declares ; ' and I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.'⁴³⁶ In which declaration, the allusion to the Prophet Daniel is too plain to be mistaken ; ' And I beheld and the same horn [Antichrist] made war with the saints, and prevailed against them : until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High.'⁴³⁷ If some of the persons, on whom it is here implied, that justification will be pronounced, are not found among those whom the Evangelist declares blessed, as dying after the angel, who announced the commencement of the Millennium, had proclaimed that ' Babylon was fallen ;'⁴³⁸ it seems not possible to say where they may be discovered. ' The saints and martyrs ' are described by him not merely as justified but

⁴³⁶ Rev. xx. 4.

⁴³⁷ Dan. vii. 21, 22.

⁴³⁸ Vid. *supr.* p. 146.

rewarded: 'the rest of the dead' wait for the delivery of their sentence, till the day of judgment. From the alternative to which the question is limited, it follows, that they alone can be meant, of whom the Evangelist declares, that 'they are 'blessed, as dying in the Lord.' As, at the time of their joining the Church of the first-born which 'are in heaven, and spirits of just men made 'perfect,'⁴³⁹ the thrones are represented as set, and the saints invested with the authority of judges; it is surely not unreasonable to conclude, that these assessors with Christ,⁴⁴⁰ will join in the sentence which is passed upon the souls that are admitted to beatitude and glory. While the works of 'the rest 'of the dead' are recorded in 'the books,' which remain closed until the day of judgment,⁴⁴¹ their's 'follow them' into the mansions of the blessed. And when confessed, by the omniscient Judge,⁴⁴² in the presence of the assembled saints; they will unite in the sentence, if not of justification, of approval.⁴⁴³

In the millenary state, as thus described, we readily descry all those characters, by which the Jubilee was distinguished, as a sabbatism of the highest order.⁴⁴⁴ The kingdoms of the world, recovered from the dominion of the wicked, will,

⁴³⁹ Heb. xii. 23.

⁴⁴⁰ Vid. supr. p. 144.

⁴⁴¹ Rev. xx. 12.

⁴⁴² Luke xii. 8.

⁴⁴³ Vid. 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.

⁴⁴⁴ Vid. supr. p. 122.

in that happy time, become the inheritance of God's people. To them the earth, teeming with the beneficence of providence, will yield its increase, and time, in its exclusive dedication to religion, become peculiarly holy. Oppression will cease throughout the world ; and the fear of the Lord be a ruling principle. In it liberty, in an eminent degree, will be proclaimed to the captive and the slave ; and every forfeited privilege be restored, as in the time of that Great Restitution. The righteous, emancipated from Antichristian bondage and oppression, will possess the earth ; and the blessed, freed from the tyranny of sin and death, inherit the beatitude of heaven. Here, reinstated in that purity, immortality, and bliss, which were lost by transgression, they will enjoy an everlasting sabbath.

To the attainment of an inheritance in this glorious state, it is, however, of the last moment to observe, that certain disqualifications are mentioned as irremediable by the Apostle. He has accordingly represented '*a third angel*,' as following the two who shall announce the opening of the Millennium ; to whom the charge is committed, to utter a warning voice, against the danger which might be thus incurred, and the dreadful retribution with which the transgression would be visited.

' And the third angel followed, saying with a loud voice, if any man *worship the beast and his*

‘ *image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,* the same shall drink of the wine of the ‘ wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture ‘ into the cup of his indignation, and he shall ‘ be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the ‘ presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of ‘ the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascend- ‘ eth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest ‘ day nor night, *who worship the beast and his image,* ‘ and whoever receiveth the mark of his name.’⁴⁴⁵

The events of which the two first angels are represented as the heralds, will be discerned in their sensible effects; as the universal diffusion of the Gospel, and the retribution visited upon Antichrist will be manifested to the world. The image of two angels, deputed on a special mission, under which these events were exhibited to the enrapt imagination of the Evangelist, may be understood as the personifications of *the divine agency*, by which they will be accomplished. The extraordinary power, by which the Evangelical Law will be disseminated, and the Antichristian usurpation suppressed, is indeed represented, with equal clearness and beauty, by those winged spirits who are the heralds of God’s purposes, and the ministers of his judgments. In the latter sense, ‘ the third angel’ is to be also understood, as a personification of the fiery vengeance of God,

⁴⁴⁵ Rev. xiv. 9, 10, 11.

directed against those who are the hired or sworn adversaries of his kingdom.

It has been justly observed by the expositors of the preceding passage, that *slaves* were branded 'in 'the forehead,' and *soldiers* 'in the hand.'⁴⁴⁶ The figure by which the adherents of 'the beast' are said to 'receive his mark,' or 'the mark of his 'name,' in either part of the body, consequently means nothing more than that they were subservient to his purposes, or enrolled among his allies; bound either servilely to perform, or violently to enforce his commands. No greater liberty is taken by the Evangelist in the employment of this licence, than when he represents 'the righteousness of the 'saints' by white garments;⁴⁴⁷ a spotless purity being shadowed under the image. There is, however, a third class, who, in the opposition instituted between the followers of the beast, as 'small and 'great, free and bond,'⁴⁴⁸ must be distinguished from those who are hired or sworn to execute his purposes, and branded as his slaves. These are distinguished by the Evangelist, as having, not 'the mark,' but 'the number of his name.'⁴⁴⁹ Such, consequently, must be regarded as the allies of a less public and an independent character, who are known to him, and to each other, by a private

⁴⁴⁶ Vid. Wetst. et Wolf, in Apoc. xiii. 16. conf. Spencer de Leg. Hebr. Lib. II. cap. xx. § 3. Pitisc. Lexic. voc. 'Inscriptio.'

⁴⁴⁷ Rev. xix. 8. ⁴⁴⁸ Ibid. xiii. 16. ⁴⁴⁹ Ibid. 17.

symbol, or countersign.⁴⁵⁰ In a word, they compose his *secret*, as opposed to his *branded* adherents.

As 'the beast and his image' have been already identified with the Antichristian power, which passed in succession from the Emperors to the Popes; the persons, against whom the denunciations of 'the third angel' are uttered, thus prove to be identical with the active agents of that profane usurpation; the servants and soldiers by whom his tyranny is maintained and extended. In the former class may be numbered those who uphold his influence by the more lenient modes of

⁴⁵⁰ Rev. xiii. 16. 'That no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or *the number of his name*.' This allusion to the act of 'buying and selling' seems to point to the *tesserae*, or tallies, by which the stipulating parties to a contract or obligation were known to each other. They were not only given by merchants, as pledges of a bargain; but scattered by the Roman Emperors, among the multitude at the theatres, as the price of their idolatrous acclamations and flattery: vid. Pitisc. Lex. utsupr. Vol. II. voc. 'tesserae mercatorum.' p. 938. 'theatrales.' p. 939. On producing them, the party was recognised, as entitled to the price or value, of which they were the symbol or pledge. In 'the number of a name,' a verbal symbol is, however, plainly meant; such as was proper to the Cabbala; in which words were cryptographically substituted for each other, according to *the numerical force* of the characters: vid. supr. p. 31, 32. It may be thus easily seen, in explanation of the Apostle's text, how an ally or accomplice might reveal himself, by 'knowing *the number*' expressive of the characters 'of a name;' while 'the name'

persuasion, insinuation and address ; in the latter, those who enlarge it by the terrific and violent means of persecution, oppression, and torture. While those who employ corruption and venality, as the method of exalting his throne, may rank by themselves, as a separate and less dependant order. From the connexion which is established between their fate, and the fall of the seat of Antichrist, by the Evangelist ; it would appear, that the judgment with which they will be respectively visited, will be nearly coincident in time. Nor is it unreasonable to suppose, that their punishment, any more than the reward of the saints who were the victims of their fury, will be deferred ‘ to the day of wrath ‘ and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.’⁴⁵¹ As the Evangelist declares, with an emphatical change of tense, from past to present time ; ‘ the ‘ smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and

itself, and of course the sovereign whom he served, remained undivulged. It appears to me, that St. John, in opposing ‘ the ‘ number of *a name*,’ in this sense, to ‘ the number of *a man*,’ in the following verse (Rev. *ibid.* 17.), intended to *contradistinguish* a secret symbol from *a proper number*. The latter phrase is justly explained, after the Apostle himself, by Wetstein in loc. ‘ *Esai. viii. 1. Hab. ii 2. Apoc. xxi. 17.* quali homines ‘ *vulgò utuntur*, et qui *ab hominibus inveniri potest*.’ This explanation is wholly inapplicable to a name of mystical significance ; of which the profane vulgar could divine nothing, and the initiated only could reveal the proper force : vid. *supr.* p. 33.

⁴⁵¹ Rom. ii. 5.

‘ever;’⁴⁵² it would appear that their retribution will be simultaneous with the reward of the saints, in whose presence, we are assured, it will be inflicted. If we may adopt this conclusion, to which the order followed in the Apocalyptic vision affords no inconsiderable support; the judgment delivered by the saints, who are assessors with Christ, will be probably passed on these delinquents. Among the characters by which the millenary reign will be distinguished, these contrary states of the persecutor and the martyr may be consequently included. In their different allotments the righteousness and justice of God will be manifested to angels and men; as ‘the shame and everlasting contempt,’⁴⁵³ to which the one is consigned, will be contrasted with the triumph and everlasting joy to which the other is promoted.

On regarding ‘the kingdom of God,’ as extended to the utmost limits of the universe, the manifestation of his authority will be thus rendered commensurate with the world which he has created. Thus immeasurably shall his attributes of grace and justice be displayed, and the modes of his providence be publicly vindicated in the eyes of his rational creatures. To this reign, in which his righteous judgments shall be alone dispensed, a duration of *one thousand years* is assigned.⁴⁵⁴ And that this time is to be understood as a definitive

⁴⁵² Rev. xiv. 11.

⁴⁵³ Dan. xii. 2. comp. vii. 22.

⁴⁵⁴ Rev. xx. 4, 5.

period, the order of his providence, as deducible from the dispensations by which his will has been progressively revealed, seems fully to warrant us in concluding. On omitting the earlier ages from the computation, respecting the chronology of which doubts have been raised, though on no reasonable foundation; from the epoch to which the testimony of history extends, the course of time is distributed into periods precisely of that length, with a regularity that almost surpasses credibility.⁴⁵⁵ The year 3001 from the Creation was

⁴⁵⁵ On the subject of the year A. D. 5001, which is omitted in this distribution of the course of time, by millenary portions, I shall quote the following authorities. They will not merit further observation, when it is observed, how clearly they prove the usurpation of Antichrist to have been then *at the summit*. Calvis. Chronol. Univ. ad A. post C. 998. 'Otto Imperator, 'cùm ipse destitueretur liberis, in quos imperium derivari potest, 'multique essent qui Imperio inhiarent, in Italiâ, atque etiam 'fortassis in Galliâ, *re deliberatâ cum Pontifice Gregorio cognato* 'suo, constituit *in frequentissimâ Synodo*, principum Germaniæ, 'Italiæ, et *Episcoporum*, ut apud solos Germanos principes, tam 'politicos quam ecclesiasticos; *jus eligendi Regem esset*, qui 'postea *a Pontifice consecraretur Imperator.*' He adds, a little lower down, under the same date, 'Papa Innocentius, quando 'Imperatorem Fridericum II. *in Concilio Lugdunensi diris* 'devovet et alium eligere jubet, anno 1245. septem quidem 'principibus, ut Duci Austricæ, Duci Bavariæ, Duci Saxonum, 'Duci Brabanticæ, item Episcopis Coloniensi, Moguntino, et 'Salisburgensi, *demandat*: ut testatur qui tum vixit Matthæus 'Parisiensis.' Such was the authority which succeeded the last of the prophetic Empires; comp. Dan. vii. 13, 14. 17, 18. 21, 22.

distinguished by the visible descent of the Divine Glory into ' the Temple made with hands ; '⁴⁵⁶ and the year 4001 by its manifestation in ' *the Temple* ' of our Lord's body.'⁴⁵⁷ As the intermediate period of 2000 years to the Millennium, and this happy period of 1000 years, accord with the same distribution, as revealed by the Prophets ;⁴⁵⁸ it will not be surely deemed unwarrantable to infer, that in the year 6001, from which the commencement of the Great Sabbath is dated, that Glory will more fully occupy ' the Church, which is his body, a ' *holy Temple* in the Lord, builded together for a ' habitation of God, through the Spirit.'⁴⁵⁹

To another and greater change, the authority of prophecy describes the constitution of nature as exposed, and the Evangelist, in placing it at the close of ' the thousand years which must be fulfilled,'⁴⁶⁰ refers it to the year 7001, at the commencement of the following Millennium. The awful events by which the transition from the great to the eternal sabbath is distinguished, mark the close of the millennial reign ; it consequently falls within our province to bestow upon them a transient consideration,

⁴⁵⁶ 1 King. viii. 10. 2 Chron. v. 14. conf. supr. p. 26. n. ⁶⁴.

⁴⁵⁷ John ii. 21. i. 14. 1 Tim. iii. 16. conf. Burnet Theory, ut supr. p. 264.

⁴⁵⁸ Vid. supr. p. 36.

⁴⁵⁹ Eph. i. 22, 23. ii. 21. 22. conf. Barnab. Epist. cap. xvi.

⁴⁶⁰ Rev. xx. 3. 11—15.

in drawing the subject to a conclusion. As 'the rest of the dead,' among whom we shall be then numbered, will 'live again, after the thousand years are finished ;'⁴⁶¹ the consideration of this time is of more intimate concern to ourselves, as in it our own lot will be finally determined.

The scene of the last day, to which the great catastrophe of nature is referred by the Evangelist, is invested by him in the awful solemnity of a tribunal, seated for passing a final sentence of condemnation or acquittal.

' And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away ; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another great book was opened, which is the book of life ; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it : and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.'⁴⁶²

Of the dreadful associations of this scene, the intimations of revelation, though brief,⁴⁶³ are so overpowering, that the objects of nature, and the

⁴⁶¹ Rev. xx. 3. 5.

⁴⁶² Ibid. 11—14.

⁴⁶³ 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.

images of fancy are destitute of subjects of comparison, by which we may convey the faintest picture of its unfolding terrors. For what, in observation or conception, can be assimilated to the awakening sound of the Archangel's trump, at which even the ear of death will thrill ; the descent of the Son of God, with the acclamation of an innumerable host of angels ? What compared to the hideous and interminable waste of yawning graves, which the earth will then exhibit, while countless apparitions, rising from their gloomy abodes, ascend before the august and dreadful tribunal ? And who, that turns from this terrific sight to the more terrible appearance of ' the great ' white throne, and Him that sits upon it,' shall be able to abide his presence, before ' whose face the ' heavens and the earth shall flee away ? ' To what display of brightness or effects of power, witnessed upon earth, can the Glorious Majesty be equalled ; or the resistless force by which a world is shaken from its foundations ? Compared to which the sun is as the spark that twinkles and is extinct ;—the rage of the tornado, or volcano—the fury of the storm that teems the ocean from the abyss, or the earthquake that rends and shatters the continent, are as the breeze that ripples the lake, and the dimple that plays upon its surface.

On the tribunal, before which the population of the earth will be cited to appear, it is unnecessary

to comment or dilate. The images under which it is described, the Almighty seated in judgment on his throne, the recording and the accusing angel, the books in which our works are entered and our doom enrolled, are rather intended to impress us with an awful sense of the event, than to impart an idea of its nature. Of the judicial procedure by which sentence will be pronounced upon the just and unjust, it is vain, if not irreverent, to indulge in conjectures. An ancient writer, who is distinguished for his attachment to allegorical senses, supposes, that the judge and the accuser will be the conscience of the guilty.⁴⁶⁴ When the terrific majesty of the Son of God is made apparent to the world, as ‘the lightning shines from one end ‘of heaven to the other’⁴⁶⁵ the wicked and the infidel will be reduced to a just sense of their guilt and of his divinity; and execution follow upon the transgressor, without the formalities of a trial, or the denunciation of a sentence.

With respect to the final destiny of the earth, its future dissolution by fire is as plainly foretold, as its former destruction by water is narrated, in Scripture.⁴⁶⁶ Of the writers who have treated of the subject of the Millennium, two have devised theories, in which they have undertaken to account for its origin and destruction, on physical prin-

⁴⁶⁴ Orig. Com. in Matt. tom. xvii. § 35. ⁴⁶⁵ Matt. xxiv. 26.

⁴⁶⁶ 2 Pet. iii. 7. 10. conf. supr. p. 127. n. ³⁰⁰.

ciples. The first, who may be considered the founder of the geological school, supposes that three causes will contribute to the catastrophe, in which it is doomed to perish.⁴⁶⁷ A central fire, which he supposes to exist within the bowels of the earth, will be the great magazine from whence the flame is to issue, by which it will be laid waste; the scorching heat of the sun, by rendering it combustible, having prepared it for the devouring element. The upper regions will be thus rarified, and rendered highly electric, for the operation of the meteoric fires, which he supposes will contribute their force to kindle it into a flame. But to the physical agency by which it is thus conceived the frame of this earth will be dissolved, a writer of the same school supposes it necessary, that another natural cause should be added.⁴⁶⁸ He considers it most consonant to the declarations of scripture and the operations of nature, that the consuming fire, by which it will perish, should be aided, if not communicated by a comet. As the deluge was caused by the descent of one of these bodies to the sun, the conflagration will be effected by the ascent of one, impregnated with the igneous matter, from the centre of the system.

These rude and complicated theories have been formed with a view to dispose of the immense body

⁴⁶⁷ Burnet Theory, B. III. ch. vii.

⁴⁶⁸ Whiston New Theory, B. IV. ch. v.

of water, which covers and pervades the earth ; the existence of which is conceived by these authors to oppose insuperable obstacles to its destruction by a conflagration. The discoveries of modern chemists have, however, tended to prove, that water itself may be employed in such a mode of destruction. As it is formed by the combination of oxygen with hydrogen ; it unites in its composition an inflammable gas with the greatest supporter of combustion. It is thus constituted by its nature, to become a principle of the destruction, which is effected by fire. Even from the same element, volcanic eruptions and meteoric fires are supposed to proceed ; which furnish the ancient theorists with the magazines from whence they suppose the frame of the globe will be set on flame. Volcanic eruptions are conceived, by the ablest of modern chemists,⁴⁶⁹ to originate from metals, existing in the earth in a pure state, and inaccessible to air and oxygen, but which, on coming in contact with water, are directly ignited. Meteors are equally supposed to be small planetary bodies, which revolve in different systems, until coming within the attraction of our earth, they directly inflame, on entering into its atmosphere. By the same celebrated chemist, they are supposed to consist originally of the pure metals of silex and magnesia, united with iron and nickel ; the former

⁴⁶⁹ Sir H. Davy.

of which, when brought in contact with the oxygen of our atmosphere, directly take fire. While, by the simple process of decomposition and combination, such effects may be produced ; we need not have recourse to the higher operations of creation and annihilation, in order to prove the physical possibility of a general conflagration. Since by a slight modification of the contrary elements, which are thus wonderfully poised, the equilibrium of nature might be destroyed ; and that combustion produced, from which the destruction of the earth must inevitably follow. And rare as are the confirmations which revelation derives from science ; it furnishes evidence not only of the disruption of one planet by some immense internal force, but of the extinction of an entire system, in the destruction of the sun, which was the centre of its light and motion. From the nature of the orbits of the asteroids, which modern observation has discovered in our system, it is collected, that they are fragments of a great planet, which was shattered by some internal force, and the parts projected from the point where their orbits are found to have a common intersection. And from the suddenly encreased splendor and final disappearance of one of the fixed stars, of which the observers at the beginning of the seventeenth century have given an account, astronomers have been led to conclude, that the systems, of which those bodies are supposed to form the suns

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are not merely subject to decay, but to absolute extinction.

Without having recourse to the supposition that the great abyss may explode, or the shell of the earth be broken up, by the shock of a comet; without supposing the operation of meteoric or subterranean fires, and that the craters of innumerable volcanos voiding forth molten torrents, will cover the face of nature with a sea of liquid fire; we may conceive the possibility, that, by the decomposition of the ocean, the surface of the globe may be overwhelmed with a fiery deluge. In the earth, reduced to this state of liquid fire, we most easily distinguish 'the burning lake;' in which we are assured, that all besides those on whom 'the second death hath no power,' will perish everlasting.⁴⁷⁰

Of the mansions intended for the blessed we have been vouchsafed more particular information. In the New Jerusalem, the descent of which from heaven is described by the Evangelist,⁴⁷¹ a place of rest is provided for the righteous. To this para-disaical abode, there is the plainest allusion in 'the Epistle to the Hebrews,' in which it is described as the place of rest, into which 'the spirits of just men made perfect' are received.⁴⁷² The

⁴⁷⁰ Rev. xx. 14, 15. ⁴⁷¹ Rev. xxi. 2. 10.

⁴⁷² Heb. xii. 22, 23. Gal. iv. 26.

Apostle, describing the faith of the Patriarchs, as directed to a repose, in this ‘ better and heavenly country ;’⁴⁷³ represents ‘ God as having provided some better thing for us, that they without us might not be made perfect.’⁴⁷⁴ It would thus appear, that his allusion is to the union which will take place, in this blessed abode, between the sainted spirits, who receive their reward after ‘ the first resurrection,’ and the just who are raised up to glory by ‘ the second.’ Of this ‘ great city, the holy Jerusalem, having the glory of God, of which the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple,’⁴⁷⁵ the Evangelist is ample in his description. He represents it as ‘ having no need of the sun, neither of the moon, for the glory of God shall enlighten it, and the Lamb be the light thereof :’ declaring that ‘ there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.’⁴⁷⁶

While the preceding views of the time and nature of the millenary state are fundamentally opposed to the dogmas of the theorist and his school ; they exhibit the most exact conformity to the opinions of the Apostolical Fathers, who professed to preserve the tradition, which was transmitted to them by St. John, from our Saviour.⁴⁷⁷ By St. Barnabas,

⁴⁷³ Heb. xi. 16.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid. 40.

⁴⁷⁵ Rev. xxi. 10. 22.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid. 23, 24.

⁴⁷⁷ Vid. *supr.* p. 16.

the entire course of time is distributed into periods of a thousand years, according to the number of the days in the week, at the Creation. After the analogy of the seventh day, he declares the seventh Millennium would be a sabbath of rest, and would be immediately preceded by the overthrow and punishment of the wicked; alluding, without doubt, to the destruction of Antichrist. To the commencement of the eighth Millennium he refers the beginning of the New World; and establishes his views respecting it, by the analogy of the Christian sabbath, as opposed to the Jewish.⁴⁷⁸ In the statement of the Asiatic Elders, who professed to derive their information directly from St. John, three states are expressly acknowledged, as reserved for the righteous.⁴⁷⁹ While those who should remain alive, would enjoy a paradisaical state upon earth; those who should die would be at once translated into a state of beatitude in heaven: besides which, a third state is recognised in the New Jerusalem, where the Church will enjoy its eternal sabbath, after the general resurrection. Between these views, and those maintained by the theorist, the opposition is fundamental and irreconcilable. He places the destruction and renovation of the earth at the close of the sixth Millennium; which he

⁴⁷⁸ S. Barnab. Epist. cap. xv.

⁴⁷⁹ Ap. S. Iren. adv. Hær. Lib. V. cap. xxxvi. § 1.

conceives to be a state alike exempt from natural and moral evil, and supposes to be the exclusive place of rest for the righteous. Whatever be the countenance which his opinions may derive from Papias and his followers, it will have little weight when opposed to the decision of the Apostolical Fathers, who drew from the pure source of the traditional stream, while their successors received it, as polluted in the channel through which it was transmitted.

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